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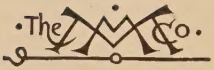

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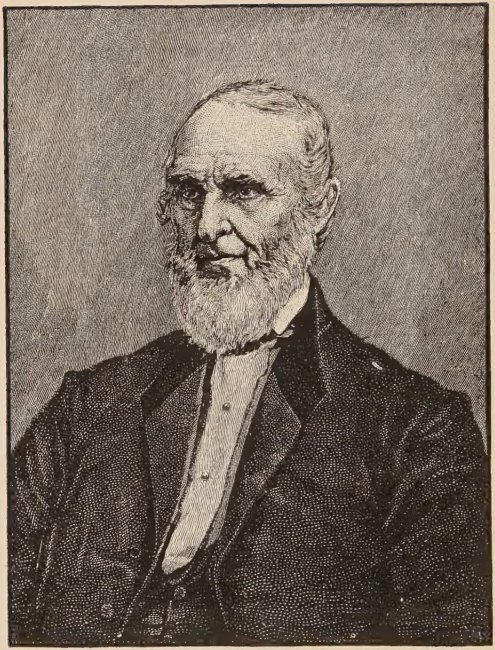

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

SNOW-BOUND

AND OTHER EARLY POEMS

OF

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

EDITED

WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

ARCHIBALD L. BOUTON, M.A.

PROFESSOR OF RHETORIC IN NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

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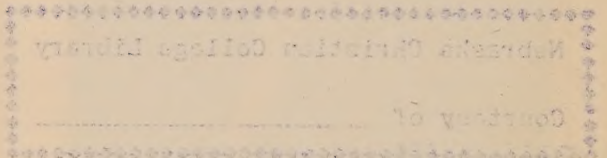

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INTRODUCTION

WHITTIER'S LIFE AND WORK

Early Life. Literary Beginnings, 1807–1833. — John Greenleaf Whittier, the Quaker poet of New England, who shares with Longfellow the distinction of being in a national sense, the most widely accepted and beloved of American poets, was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, on December 17, 1807. He was descended through several generations of Quaker ancestors on both his father's side and his mother's. Thomas Whittier, his first American ancestor, himself not a Quaker though in strong sympathy with them, came to America in 1638. In 1647 he moved to the farm, three miles from Haverhill, which has ever since been known as the Whittier homestead. Here he built in 1688, it is supposed, the house, still standing, which is commemorated in *Snow-Bound*. In it the poet was born, the second of four children, to John and Abigail Whittier.

Life upon the Whittier farm was of great simplicity. Not over thirty books, mostly religious, constituted the family library; but chief among them was the Bible. Of social life outside the little that lay within the walls of the home, the church, and the country school, there was almost none. Of spelling-schools

and singing-schools, of debating societies and lyceums, the usual diversions of New England rural life, at least at a slightly later period, we find few beginnings in the life of the Whittier family. Hard work upon a reluctant soil, with few comforts and no luxuries, were abiding characteristics; but animating all was the inspiration of a profound, if sectarian, religious faith; underlying it was the Quaker love of freedom and the Puritan belief in the equality of all men before the law; while from the pages of *Snow-Bound* we know that there was no lack of zest in such simple pleasures as life in the Whittier homestead made possible.

With one important exception, Whittier's formal education was summed up in a few winters in the district school. When he was fourteen the teacher brought to Whittier's home one evening a book of Burns's poems and read them to the family. It was the awakening of the boy's soul. Later a Scotch pedlar introduced him to the charm of the true Scotch vernacular. Soon he began to compose verses of his own. His older sister, Mary, by stealth and without the boy's knowledge, sent one of his poems to Newburyport, near by, to a weekly newspaper, which was then edited by William Lloyd Garrison, soon to become famous as leader of the Abolitionist movement against slavery. The poem was published in the issue of June 8, 1826, and Whittier in a daze of astonishment saw his work in print for the first time when the mail carrier threw a copy of the paper to him as he worked by the roadside helping his father repair a stone wall. In a few days Garrison himself, struck with the promise of the poem, came to the house to see young Whittier. It was the turning-point in the boy's career.

The next winter he attended the Haverhill Academy, and, while he lived in the home of the editor of the *Haverhill Gazette*, earned his way by making slippers at eight cents a pair; ending the six months in Haverhill Academy with twenty-five cents in his pocket, precisely as at the beginning of the winter he had planned to do. His contact with Garrison and with the editor of the *Haverhill Gazette* gave him the opportunity to write for the press. Through Garrison's intercession he obtained a staff position on the *American Manufacturer*, published in Boston. This was the first of a series of editorial positions which he occupied with slight intermission during the ten years from 1830 to 1840, until failing health caused him permanently to resign all regular work of a routine sort and retire to a home at Amesbury, where he dwelt in quiet but not in idleness for the remainder of his days. Whittier, early in the period of his editorial activities, developed much political talent, and nourished high political ambitions. It is probable that he would at an early period have been elected to Congress had he not chosen to ally himself with the Abolitionists in their antagonism to slavery.

The Antislavery Period, 1833–1861. — This act of choice and renunciation, crucially determined by the deliberate publication, in 1833, of a prose pamphlet, entitled *Justice and Expediency, or Slavery considered with a View to its Abolition*, constituted the second great turning-point in Whittier's career. In common with many leading men of Massachusetts he had, before then, not without vigor, opposed slavery as an institution. As early as 1831 he had contributed to Garrison's paper, *The Liberator*. But before 1833 he had opposed slavery in more or less an extra-political

way. Men at that time were, in general throughout the country, extremely anxious to keep slavery out of politics. Abolitionism was, even in New England, violently unpopular. To oppose slavery was very well as a matter of moral principle; to exalt abolition into a principle of political action was a very different thing. It genuinely threatened the national safety — as the subsequent Civil War sufficiently proves. So long as Whittier did not propose political action against slavery, his immediate party associates acquiesced in such principles as he held. But Whittier was a Quaker; and that meant, in this period of his life, not so much love of peace and quiet as it did hatred of all that contradicted the right of anybody to liberty,—hatred of slavery. All the stored-up memories of the persecution and tyranny and martyrdom to which Quakers had been subjected in the seventeenth century in both the Old and New England were, it would seem, inherited by Whittier, and the second great period of his life commencing with the publication of the pamphlet mentioned, and the adoption of abolition as a principle of political action, began with the deliberate renunciation of a bright political future and the adoption of an unpopular propaganda. But he never regretted the act. When he was an old man he gave this advice to a boy of fifteen, "My lad, if thou wouldst win success, join thyself to some unpopular but noble cause."

In 1836 he went to Philadelphia and continued there until 1840, being after 1837 editor of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*. During much of the same period he was secretary of the American Antislavery Society, and began then to contribute lyrics against slavery to *The National Era*, of Washington, D.C. It was in this paper that

Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* first appeared. In 1838 his editorial offices were raided and burned by a mob; but Whittier, disguised in a wig and long coat, entered his own office, along with the mob that would, upon recognizing him, probably have taken his life, and was able thereby to save many of his papers. Nor was this his only experience with mob peril. In New England, later, he narrowly escaped being tarred and feathered, and was often in danger of assault. Brave and determined as an agitator, and bitter as was the great controversy in which he was engaged, Whittier never lost a certain magnanimity which enabled him to yield sympathy and admiration to fine qualities in his opponents. To Calhoun he paid the tribute of deep respect, and his commemorative poem, *John Randolph of Roanoke*, is conceived in a finely generous spirit. Agitator as he was, he possessed, moreover, a certain poise, a breadth of vision in which Garrison and Phillips and his other Abolitionist partisans were generally lacking. So at length it came to pass that in spite of his affiliation with the Abolitionists his influence as a political counsellor of some of the leading statesmen of the day was very great — immensely greater than his actual position as a partisan would seem to indicate. Properly to estimate his political services, however, one other factor needs consideration.

Whittier's poetic talent was by no means rusting. From 1829 to 1832 he had published one hundred poems. In 1831 most of them with a few prose sketches were gathered into a pamphlet under the title, *Legends of New England in Prose and Verse*, and published. Five years later he published his first book, *Mogg Megone*, a long narrative poem somewhat in the style

of Scott. In his later years the poet wished to suppress these earlier writings, and few lovers of Whittier now read them. All this work was merely a training for better things which he was already beginning to do. For twenty years, and in considerable measure for thirty, Whittier's poetic power was at the service of his great political and moral aim, the abolition of slavery. The human sympathy, the sincerity, the arousing force of these antislavery lyrics, these *Voices of Freedom*, made them political weapons, better than arguments, and perhaps second only to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in actual influence in swaying popular opinion against slavery. James Russell Lowell, certainly no mean judge, sums up Whittier's political work in these words: "Whenever occasion offered, some burning lyric flew across the country, like the fiery cross, to warn and rally. Never mingling in active politics (unless filling the office of presidential elector [*in 1860 and 1864*] may be called so), he probably did more than anybody in preparing the material out of which the Republican party was made."

Whittier's retirement from routine life in 1840 had several important results; but chiefly, while cutting off any prospects of political advancement, it gave leisure for the broader development of his artistic nature. It brought time for reading, whereby he broadened his culture; and it gave quiet moments in which his imagination could build its fabric out of legend and memory, dream and faith — materials truer and more flexible to the poet's hand than the elements of political controversy. After the appearance of *Voices of Freedom* in 1846, and its reëdition in 1849, a distinct change gradually appears in the subject-matter of Whittier's poetry. By the outbreak of Civil War he had almost ceased writing

with reference to its great cause. Yet during the years from 1850 to 1861 he published some of his most popular and a little of his best work: in 1850, the *Songs of Labor*, in which many deem him most truly a national poet; later, a group of ballads of New England life, of which *Maud Muller* and *Skipper Ireson's Ride* are familiar and typical examples; and besides these a considerable quantity of miscellaneous poems, a few of which, like *The Barefoot Boy* and *The Pipes of Lucknow*, are included in the strictly limited group of poems that "every schoolboy knows."

The Last Period, 1861–1892. — The Civil War once begun, Whittier seemed to feel that the struggle against slavery had passed into other hands. Quaker as he was, he did not however oppose the war. His occasional patriotic lyrics were exhortations to faith in the national destiny, or expressions of rejoicing in triumph of the Union armies — expressions that found their magnificent culmination in *Laus Deo*, written in 1865, when the unity of the nation was secure. Save for these flashes of the old fire of conflict, Whittier's spirit passed into the calm of contemplation and reflection. Of external episode the long, serene afternoon of his life contained but little. His younger sister, Elizabeth, with whom he made his home at Amesbury, died in 1864. It was the breaking of a peculiarly tender tie. After the stress of antislavery conflict, and thus bereft of his dearest companionship, he found rest and restoration in nature, in religion, and in literature; the love of nature and religious faith are the deepening notes of the poetry of this final and best period which in duration included more than one-third of his long lifetime. A wider familiarity with literature manifested itself in a broaden-

ing range of subjects, and a greater command of allusion. A growing attention to problems of poetic technique improved the artistic quality of his verse, and widened somewhat his command of poetic forms. Yet he continued to the end essentially a poet of the simple ideals of the common life he knew best, and expressed them in simple ways. In *The Last Walk in Autumn*, a poem written in 1857, occurs this stanza, which embodies a sort of prophetic interpretation: —

"Yet, on life's current, he who drifts
Is one with him who rows or sails;
And he who wanders widest lifts
No more of beauty's jealous veils
Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and trees,
Feels the warm Orient in the noonday air,
And from cloud minarets hears the sunset call to prayer."

Snow-Bound, written in 1865, is the most successful of his more elaborate works. *The Tent on the Beach* (1867) was a group of associated poems strung together, much as Longfellow composed his *Tales of a Wayside Inn*. *Among the Hills* (1869) began in the thought of composing a summer idyl to correspond with *Snow-Bound* as a winter idyl, but as its composition progressed Whittier found his material intractable, and the poem, pleasing as it is, will not bear the suggested comparison. In 1866 Whittier's prose works, of which there is a considerable body consisting mainly of criticisms of men and books, and discussions of slavery, and of various political and social reforms, were for the first time gathered into an edition of two volumes. Three years later the first edition of his collected works was completed by the addition to his prose works of three volumes of

poems. But afterward between 1869 and 1892 Whittier published not less than eleven volumes of poems, mostly slender books, but in their total adding much to the final complete edition of his works. Besides his original work, Whittier at various times in his life did much as an editor of the writings of others. A bibliography of his labors in this field is added to the general list of his publications given at the end of this Introduction.

In his later years, and especially after Longfellow's death in 1883, Whittier became in some sense the Poet Laureate of America. In 1876 he was invited to write the *Centennial Hymn* for use at the opening of the Philadelphia Exposition. And from that time on he entered more and more deeply into the affections of his countrymen. His seventieth birthday was marked by a special gathering of eminent fellow-citizens to do him honor. His eightieth was observed by exercises in the public schools far and wide throughout the country, and by the presentation to him of many tributes of appreciation and affection. A few years before his death he removed from Amesbury to Danvers, Massachusetts, which continued to be his home until the end. He died at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire, on September 7, 1892, and was interred at Amesbury. His last poem, written but a few weeks before, was composed in honor of the eighty-third birthday of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

His lifetime covered eighty-five years. It included the most stirring portion of our national history, a truly great part in which Whittier played. Great as was his service to political history, it is the gentle Quaker poet of the later years, the lover of nature, of

his own New England, the man of serene faith, who is secure in the abiding remembrance of his countrymen. The contemporary of Lowell and Longfellow, of Holmes, Poe, and Emerson, of Bryant and Whitman and Lanier, of all the poets that, till now, have best served our national literature, excelled by many of them in some distinctive power or charm, he yet seems in a certain simplicity of character and nobility of moral and spiritual stature to surpass them all.

Whittier's Poetry. — As a poetic artist, Whittier, it will be seen from the story of his life, underwent a long evolution. Many poets do their best writing in early life. Few men have the kind of vitality which goes on unfolding and perfecting itself far into advancing age. Whittier, like Tennyson, was of the number. His earliest work was imitative and crude, — imitative chiefly of Scott, and crude to the point where Whittier would gladly have excluded almost all of it from his later editions. His antislavery poems hold a higher place, and yet few even of them are familiar to the present generation. They were animated by intense hatred of a living national wrong, against which Whittier, like a Hebrew prophet, hurled blazing lyrical invectives. They were direct, simple, and impassioned in their earnestness. Directness, earnestness, fire, were native to him, and these qualities chiefly he embodied in the antislavery lyrics. But poetry at its best is the product of the imagination; and the imagination weaves its best in hours of quietness, and in scenes aloof from the stress of practical affairs. Seldom are political crises, however acute, however awakening of the highest powers of mankind, immediately productive of much of what, in the restricted sense of the term, we call literature. Though

surely inspiration was not wanting, the stimulus of our Civil War to creative literature was remarkably slight. The struggle was too desperately practical, too much a matter of national life and death. Poetry written at white heat, to serve the interests of principle in the hour of conflict, may flame from soul to soul, and wonderfully influence the result of the hour; but when the heat of the hour has passed, such poetry is seldom found to possess that timeless, enduring vitality which insures its permanence in the hearts of the people, after the circumstances which gave it birth have been forgotten. Whittier's antislavery lyrics, inspiring as they were and important historically as they are, stand to-day, in spite of many stirring passages, in danger of being forgotten because they are too closely connected with an issue which has passed out of mind. Artistically the period in which they were written is one of transition. In the heat of conflict, Whittier schooled his art and acquired his technique. But it was not a school in which to gain breadth of view, or variety of resource, or subtlety of magic, or perfection of phrase.

However, in the period after 1850, and yet more after 1861, there was, as already noted, aside from the waning of political lyric, a considerable widening of poetic range. So far did this extension of his choice of subject-matter continue that in the collected edition of 1889, containing Whittier's last revision of his whole work, he classified his poems, according to their content, into eight general groups: poems narrative and legendary; poems of nature; poems subjective and reminiscent; religious poems; antislavery poems; songs of labor and reform; personal poems; and occasional poems. This classification, no doubt, possesses a cer-

tain validity; yet it must be admitted that a few characteristic elements, especially the poetry of nature and of religion, are so pervasive of all his work that his assignment of a poem to a given group often seems rather arbitrary. In general, the choice of subject-matter and the method of treatment are not sharply discriminated into more than three or four of the eight groups which he has employed. In the field of narrative, by far his best poems are ballads, like *Skipper Ireson's Ride* and *Barbara Frietchie*. In many of his narrative poems want of compression often seriously diminishes their dramatic force. The religious motive is everywhere present in Whittier's poetry, as it was in his life. In the anti-slavery days it was the soul of his poetry for freedom; in his bereft age his unclouded faith gave cheer and serenity to his declining strength; it inspired *Our Master* and *The Eternal Goodness*, than which no poems hold a higher place in the religious poetry of America. From them have been taken several of our finest hymns. "The Bible," says Mr. Stedman, "is rarely absent from his verse, and its spirit never." As much, almost, may be said for the love of nature in the poetry of the later period. *Snow-Bound* as a typical instance, while essentially a reminiscent poem, and deeply religious, expresses as well Whittier's inmost feeling for nature. And just as his later poetry expresses religious faith in its serenity, so the moods of nature which affect him most deeply are those of his own New England valleys and hills, its rivers and its ocean shore in their hours of quiet beauty.

It would be natural to attribute certain obvious defects and limitations in Whittier's verse to his scant educational training — a training that, in spite of the

broad reading of his later years, was never perfected. Of his methods of work, he himself says: "I never had any methods. When I felt like it, I wrote, and I had neither the health nor the patience to work over it afterward. It usually went as it was originally completed." His verse is far from technical perfection, even in his best period. His rhymes are often seriously at fault. He never wrote blank verse well, nor did he ever stray very far from three or four metrical forms in which he had acquired freedom and confidence. He never learned to concentrate his effects in the smallest number of lines; and oftentimes the undue length of a poem serves effectually to bury from the casual reader exquisite lines and stanzas. Much interest in respect of the technical qualities of their verse will attach to comparison of Whittier's work with Longfellow's, when the two have chosen a similar subject; as Whittier's *The Shipbuilders* with Longfellow's *The Building of the Ship*. Though it would be natural to explain defects of the sort mentioned by the limitations of Whittier's early training, the real explanation probably lies deeper. Burns, probably, had no better educational opportunities than Whittier. The possession of a powerful intellect, and of a strong creative imagination, are requisite to the greatest poetry. Most lovers of his poems will probably admit that Whittier's real shortcomings lay here, and also in his lack of humor. But great poetry and great poets are not very common, in America or elsewhere; and in the impassioned moral regret of *Ichabod*, it is possible that Whittier touched a single pinnacle of real poetic greatness.

Whittier's place in the Hall of poetic Fame is secure.

Better far, so too is his place in the hearts of the people. Like Longfellow he is a poet of the people, a poet of the ideals of common life. To its turmoil and strain he brings a message of simplicity and calm. From a world of material aims his verse recalls us to a pure and beautiful life of the spirit. He speaks with a manly vigor and directness, and persuades by his deep sincerity and simple charm. In his poetry are no subtleties of argument, no obscurities of remote meaning. He troubles us with no melancholy doubts, and seeks to force upon us no mere reasonings of an abstract philosophy. Yet by his simple and true standard of life, his love of nature and humanity, his hatred of wrong, he makes an appeal to all who love righteousness and the joys of peaceful living that should never in America be overlooked, and cannot be forgotten. We can believe that Whittier would have cared but little for criticisms of himself merely as a poetic artist. More than artist in letters he was above all a poet with a conscious message — a message not to New England only, but for America, and, we may believe, for all who speak the English language. That message, grounded in the simple but enduring essential faiths of a universal humanity, he sang worthily and honestly, without thought of reward, and with a potency that makes him one of our two most-loved poets. Because of his manly and effective grappling with the great peril and curse of his time, and by reason of the native elevation of his character, his is perhaps the most noble personality among American men of letters.

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1836. Mogg Megone.
1837. Poems written during the Progress of the Abolition Question in the United States, between the years 1830 and 1838.
1838. Poems. Published by Joseph Healy, Philadelphia.
1843. Lays of My Home, and Other Poems.
1844. Miscellaneous Poems.
1846. Voices of Freedom.
1849. Poems. (A collection of Whittier's poems against Slavery.)
1850. Songs of Labor, and Other Poems.
1853. The Chapel of the Hermits, and Other Poems. A Sabbath Scene: A Sketch of Slavery in Verse.
1856. The Panorama, and Other Poems.
1857. The Sycamores.
1860. Home Ballads, Poems and Lyrics.
1863. In War Time, and Other Poems.
1865. Snow-bound.
1867. National Lyrics.
The Tent on the Beach, and Other Poems.
1869. Among the Hills, and Other Poems.
1870. Ballads of New England.
1871. Miriam, and Other Poems.
1872. The Pennsylvania Pilgrim, and Other Poems.
1874. Mabel Martin, and Other Poems.
1875. Hazel Blossoms.
1878. Vision of Echard, and Other Poems.
1880. Complete Poetical Works. Republished in London.
1881. The King's Missive, and Other Poems.
1883. The Bay of Seven Islands, and Other Poems.

1886. Poems of Nature.
Saint Gregory's Guest, and Recent Poems.
1892. At Sundown. (Privately printed, 1890.)

Complete editions of Whittier's poems were published during the poet's lifetime, in 1857, 1869, 1874, 1876, 1880, 1881, 1885, 1889.

PROSE

1833. Justice and Expediency: or, Slavery considered with a View to its Rightful and Effectual Remedy. Abolition.
1845. The Stranger in Lowell.
1847. The Supernaturalism of New England.
1849. Leaves from Margaret Smith's Journal.
1850. Old Portraits and Modern Sketches.
1854. Literary Recreations and Miscellanies.
1866. Prose Works, collected in two volumes.
1870. Two Letters on the Present Aspect of the Society of Friends. (London.)

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1832. Literary Remains of T. G. C. Brainerd. Biographical Sketch by Whittier.
1837. Views of Slavery and Emancipation: selected from Harriet Martineau's *Society in America*.
1837. Letters from John Quincy Adams to his Constituents. With Preface and two anti-slavery poems by Whittier.
1840. The North Star; the Poetry of Freedom, by her Friends.
1841. Joseph Sturge's "A Visit to the United States in 1841."
1836. The Patience of Hope. By Dora Greenwell. Edited, with an Introduction, by Whittier.
1871. Child Life, a Collection of Poems. Edited by Whittier.
1872. The Journal of John Woolman. Introduction by Whittier.
1874. Child Life in Prose. Edited by Whittier.
1876. Songs of Three Centuries: an Anthology.
1880. William Lloyd Garrison and his Times. Introduction by Whittier.

1883. Letters of Lydia Maria Child. Introduction by Whittier.
1887. American Literature and Other Papers, by E. P. Whipple. With Introductory Note by Whittier.

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BIOGRAPHY AND CRITICISM

BIOGRAPHY: *Life and Letters of John Greenleaf Whittier* (2 vols.), by Samuel T. Pickard; *Life*, by G. R. Carpenter (American Men of Letters Series); *Life*, by W. J. Linton (Great Writers Series).

CRITICISM: *Poets of America*, by E. C. Stedman; *A Literary History of America*, by Barrett Wendell; *A Fable for Critics*, by James Russell Lowell.

Abundant references to criticisms of Whittier in periodical literature may be found in Poole's Index of Periodical Literature, especially for the year 1892.

PROEM°

I LOVE the old melodious lays
Which softly melt the ages through,
The songs of Spenser's° golden days,
Arcadian Sidney's° silvery phrase,
Sprinkling our noon of time with freshest morning dew.

Yet, vainly in my quiet hours
To breathe their marvellous notes I try;
I feel them, as the leaves and flowers
In silence feel the dewy showers,
And drink with glad still lips the blessing of the sky.

The rigor of a frozen clime,
The harshness of an untaught ear,
The jarring words of one whose rhyme
Beat often Labor's hurried time,
Or Duty's rugged march through storm and strife, are here.

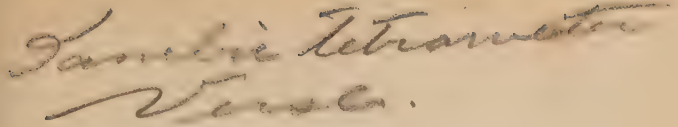
Of mystic beauty, dreamy grace,
No rounded art the lack supplies;
Unskilled the subtle lines to trace,
Or softer shades of Nature's face,
I view her common forms with unanointed eyes.

Nor mine the seer-like power to show
The secrets of the heart and mind;
To drop the plummet-line below
Our common world of joy and woe,
A more intense despair or brighter hope to find.

Yet here at least an earnest sense
Of human right and weal is shown;
A hate of tyranny intense,
And hearty in its vehemence,
As if my brother's pain and sorrow were my own.

O Freedom, if to me belong
Nor mighty Milton's gift divine,
Nor Marvell's° wit and graceful song,
Still with a love as deep and strong
As theirs, I lay, like them, my best gifts on thy shrine!

AMESBURY, 11*th mo.*, 1847.



SNOW-BOUND

A WINTER IDYL

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE HOUSEHOLD IT DESCRIBES

This Poem is Dedicated by the Author

"As the Spirits of Darkness be stronger in the dark, so Good Spirits which be Angels of Light are augmented not only by the Divine light of the Sun, but also by our common VVood Fire: and as the Celestial Fire drives away dark spirits, so also this our Fire of VVood doth the same."—COR. AGRIPPA, *Occult Philosophy*, Book I., ch. v.

"Announced by all the trumpets of the sky,
Arrives the snow; and, driving o'er the fields,
Seems nowhere to alight; the whited air
Hides hills and woods, the river and the heaven,
And veils the farm-house at the garden's end.
The sled and traveller stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the house-mates sit
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed
In a tumultuous privacy of storm."—EMERSON.

THE sun that brief December day
Rose cheerless over hills of gray,
And, darkly circled, gave at noon
A sadder light than waning moon.
Slow tracing down the thickening sky
Its mute and ominous prophecy,
A portent seeming less than threat,
It sank from sight before it set.
A chill no coat, however stout,

Of homespun stuff could quite shut out,
A hard, dull bitterness of cold,
That checked, mid-vein, the circling race
Of life-blood in the sharpened face,
The coming of the snow-storm told.
The wind blew east; we heard the roar
Of Ocean on his wintry shore,
And felt the strong pulse throbbing there
Beat with low rhythm our inland air.

Meanwhile we did our nightly chores, —
Brought in the wood from out of doors,
Littered the stalls, and from the mows
Raked down the herd's grass for the cows:
Heard the horse whinnying for his corn;
And, sharply clashing horn on horn,
Impatient down the stanchion rows
The cattle shake their walnut bows:
While, peering from his early perch
Upon the scaffold's pole of birch,
The cock his crested helmet bent
And down his querulous challenge sent.

Unwarmed by any sunset light
The gray day darkened into night,
A night made hoary with the swarm
And whirl-dance of the blinding storm,
As zigzag wavering to and fro
Crossed and recrossed the wingèd snow:
And ere the early bed-time came
The white drift piled the window-frame,
And through the glass the clothes-line posts
Looked in like tall and shrouded ghosts.

So all night long the storm roared on:
The morning broke without a sun;
In tiny spherule traced with lines
Of Nature's geometric signs,
In starry flake, and pellicle,
All day the hoary meteor fell;
And, when the second morning shone,
We looked upon a world unknown,
On nothing we could call our own.
Around the glistening wonder bent
The blue walls of the firmament,
No cloud above, no earth below, —
A universe of sky and snow!
The old familiar sights of ours
Took marvellous shapes; strange domes and towers
Rose up where sty or corn-crib stood,
Or garden wall, or belt of wood;
A smooth white mound the brush-pile showed,
A fenceless drift what once was road;
The bridle-post an old man sat
With loose-flung coat and high cocked hat;
The well-curb had a Chinese roof;
And even the long sweep, high aloof,
In its slant splendor, seemed to tell
Of Pisa's leaning miracle.°

A prompt, decisive man, no breath
Our father wasted: "Boys, a path!"
Well pleased (for when did farmer boy
Count such a summons less than joy?)
Our buskins on our feet we drew;
With mittened hands, and caps drawn low,
To guard our necks and ears from snow,

We cut the solid whiteness through.
And, where the drift was deepest, made
A tunnel walled and overlaid
With dazzling crystal: we had read
Of rare Aladdin's wondrous cave,°
And to our own his name we gave,
With many a wish the luck were ours
To test his lamp's supernal powers.
We reached the barn with merry din
And roused the prisoned brutes within.
The old horse thrust his long head out,
And grave with wonder gazed about;
The cock his lusty greeting said,
And forth his speckled harem led;
The oxen lashed their tails, and hooked,
And mild reproach of hunger looked;
The hornèd patriarch of the sheep,
Like Egypt's Amun° roused from sleep,
Shook his sage head with gesture mute,
And emphasized with stamp of foot.

All day the gusty north-wind bore
The loosening drift its breath before;
Low circling round its southern zone,
The sun through dazzling snow-mist shone.
No church-bell lent its Christian tone
To the savage air, no social smoke
Curled over woods of snow-hung oak.
A solitude made more intense
By dreary-voicèd elements,
The shrieking of the mindless wind,
The moaning tree-boughs swaying blind,
And on the grass the unmeaning beat

Of ghostly finger-tips of sleet.
Beyond the circle of our hearth
No welcome sound of toil or mirth
Unbound the spell, and testified
Of human life and thought outside.
We minded that the sharpest ear
The buried brooklet could not hear,
The music of whose liquid lip
Had been to us companionship,
And, in our lonely life, had grown
To have an almost human tone.

As night drew on, and, from the crest
Of wooded knolls that ridged the west,
The sun, a snow-blown traveller, sank
From sight beneath the smothering bank,
We piled, with care, our nightly stack
Of wood against the chimney-back, —
The oaken log, green, huge, and thick,
And on its top the stout back-stick;
The knotty forestick laid apart,
And filled between with curious art
The ragged brush; then, hovering near,
We watched the first red blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst, flower-like, into rosy bloom;
While radiant with a mimic flame
Outside the sparkling drift became,
And through the bare-boughed lilac-tree
Our own warm hearth seemed blazing free.
The crane and pendent trammels showed,

The Turks' heads on the andirons glowed;
While childish fancy, prompt to tell
The meaning of the miracle,
Whispered the old rhyme: "*Under the tree,*
When fire outdoors burns merrily,
There the witches are making tea."

The moon above the eastern wood
Shone at its full; the hill-range stood
Transfigured in the silver flood,
Its blown snows flashing cold and keen,
Dead white, save where some sharp ravine
Took shadow, or the sombre green
Of hemlocks turned to pitchy black
Against the whiteness at their back.
For such a world and such a night
Most fitting that unwarming light,
Which only seemed where'er it fell
To make the coldness visible.

Shut in from all the world without,
We sat the clean-winged hearth about,
Content to let the north-wind roar
In baffled rage at pane and door,
While the red logs before us beat
The frost-line back with tropic heat;
And ever, when a louder blast
Shook beam and rafter as it passed,
The merrier up its roaring draught
The great throat of the chimney laughed;
The house-dog on his paws outspread,
Laid to the fire his drowsy head,
The cat's dark silhouette on the wall

A couchant tiger's seemed to fall;
And, for the winter fireside meet,
Between the andirons' straddling feet,
The mug of cider simmered slow,
The apples sputtered in a row,
And, close at hand, the basket stood
With nuts from brown October's wood.

What matter how the night behaved?
What matter how the north-wind raved?
Blow high, blow low, not all its snow
Could quench our hearth-fire's ruddy glow.
O Time and Change! — with hair as gray
As was my sire's that winter day,
How strange it seems, with so much gone
Of life and love, to still live on!
Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now, —
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees
And rustle of the bladed corn;
We turn the pages that they read,
Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,
No step is on the conscious floor!

Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust
(Since He who knows our need is just),
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!

We sped the time with stories old,
Wrought puzzles out, and riddles told,
Or stammered from our school-book lore
"The Chief of Gambia's° golden shore."
How often since, when all the land
Was clay in Slavery's shaping hand,
As if a trumpet called, I've heard
Dame Mercy Warren's rousing word:
"*Does not the voice of reason cry,*
Claim the first right which Nature gave,
From the red scourge of bondage fly,
Nor deign to live a burdened slave!"
Our father rode again his ride
On Memphremagog's° wooded side;
Sat down again to moose and samp
In trapper's hut and Indian camp;
Lived o'er the old idyllic ease
Beneath St. François' hemlock trees°;
Again for him the moonlight shone
On Norman cap° and bodiced zone;

Again he heard the violin play
Which led the village dance away,
And mingled in its merry whirl
The grandam and the laughing girl.
Or, nearer home, our steps he led
Where Salisbury's° level marshes spread
  Mile-wide as flies the laden bee;
Where merry mowers, hale and strong,
Swept, scythe on scythe, their swaths along
  The low green prairies of the sea.
We shared the fishing off Boar's Head,°
  And round the rocky Isles of Shoals°
  The hake-broil on the drift-wood coals;
The chowder on the sand-beach made,
Dipped by the hungry, steaming hot,
With spoons of clam-shell from the pot.
We heard the tales of witchcraft old,
And dream and sign and marvel told
To sleepy listeners as they lay
Stretched idly on the salted hay,
Adrift along the winding shores,
When favoring breezes deigned to blow
The square sail of the gundelow,
And idle lay the useless oars.

Our mother, while she turned her wheel
Or run the new-knit stocking-heel,
Told how the Indian hordes came down
At midnight on Cochecho° town,
And how her own great-uncle bore
His cruel scalp-mark to fourscore.
Recalling, in her fitting phrase,
  So rich and picturesque and free,

(The common unrhymed poetry
Of simple life and country ways),
The story of her early days, —
She made us welcome to her home;
Old hearths grew wide to give us room;
We stole with her a frightened look
At the gray wizard's conjuring-book,
The fame whereof went far and wide
Through all the simple country-side;
We heard the hawks at twilight play,
The boat-horn on Piscataqua,°
The loon's weird laughter far away;
We fished her little trout-brook, knew
What flowers in wood and meadow grew,
What sunny hillsides autumn-brown
She climbed to shake the ripe nuts down,
Saw where in sheltered cove and bay
The ducks' black squadron anchored lay,
And heard the wild-geese calling loud
Beneath the gray November cloud.
Then, haply, with a look more grave,
And soberer tone, some tale she gave
From painful Sewell's ancient tome,°
Beloved in every Quaker home,
Of faith fire-winged by martyrdom,
Or Chalkley's Journal,° old and quaint, —
Gentlest of skippers, rare sea-saint! —
Who, when the dreary calms prevailed,
And water-butt and bread-cask failed,
And cruel, hungry eyes pursued
His portly presence mad for food,
With dark hints muttered under breath
Of casting lots for life or death,

Offered, if Heaven withheld supplies,
To be himself the sacrifice.
Then, suddenly, as if to save
The good man from his living grave,
A ripple on the water grew,
A school of porpoise dashed in view.
"Take, eat," he said, "and be content;
These fishes in my stead are sent
By Him who gave the tangled ram°
To spare the child of Abraham."

Our uncle, innocent of books,
Was rich in lore of fields and brooks,
The ancient teachers never dumb
Of Nature's unhoused lyceum.
In moons and tides and weather wise,
He read the clouds as prophecies,
And foul or fair could well divine,
By many an occult hint and sign,
Holding the cunning-warded keys
To all the woodcraft mysteries;
Himself to Nature's heart so near
That all her voices in his ear
Of beast or bird had meanings clear,
Like Apollonius° of old,
Who knew the tales the sparrows told,
Or Hermes,° who interpreted
What the sage cranes of Nilus said;
A simple, guileless, childlike man,
Content to live where life began;
Strong only on his native grounds,
The little world of sights and sounds
Whose girdle was the parish bounds,

Whereof his fondly partial pride
The common features magnified,
As Surrey hills to mountains grew
In White of Selborne's° loving view, —
He told how teal and loon he shot,
And how the eagle's eggs he got,
The feats on pond and river done,
The prodigies of rod and gun;
Till, warming with the tales he told,
Forgotten was the outside cold,
The bitter wind unheeded blew,
From ripening corn the pigeons flew,
The partridge drummed i' the wood, the mink
Went fishing down the river-brink.
In fields with bean or clover gay,
The woodchuck, like a hermit gray,
Peered from the doorway of his cell;
The muskrat plied the mason's trade,
And tier by tier his mud-walls laid;
And from the shagbark overhead
The grizzled squirrel dropped his shell.

Next, the dear aunt, whose smile of cheer
And voice in dreams I see and hear, —
The sweetest woman ever Fate
Perverse denied a household mate,
Who, lonely, homeless, not the less
Found peace in love's unselfishness,
And welcome wheresoe'er she went,
A calm and gracious element,
Whose presence seemed the sweet income
And womanly atmosphere of home, —
Called up her girlhood memories,

The huskings and the apple-bees,
The sleigh-rides and the summer sails,
Weaving through all the poor details
And homespun warp of circumstance
A golden woof-thread of romance.
For well she kept her genial mood
And simple faith of maidenhood;
Before her still a cloud-land lay,
The mirage loomed across her way;
The morning dew, that dries so soon
With others, glistened at her noon;
Through years of toil and soil and care,
From glossy tress to thin gray hair,
All unprofaned she held apart
The virgin fancies of the heart.
Be shame to him of woman born
Who hath for such but thought of scorn.

There, too, our elder sister plied
Her evening task the stand beside;
A full, rich nature, free to trust,
Truthful and almost sternly just,
Impulsive, earnest, prompt to act,
And make her generous thought a fact,
Keeping with many a light disguise
The secret of self-sacrifice.
O heart sore-tried! thou hast the best
That Heaven itself could give thee, — rest,
Rest from all bitter thoughts and things!
How many a poor one's blessing went
With thee beneath the low green tent
Whose curtain never outward swings!

As one who held herself a part
Of all she saw, and let her heart
  Against the household bosom lean,
Upon the motley-braided mat
Our youngest and our dearest sat,
Lifting her large, sweet, asking eyes,
  Now bathed within the fadeless green°
And holy peace of Paradise.
Oh, looking from some heavenly hill,
  Or from the shade of saintly palms,
  Or silver reach of river calms,
Do those large eyes behold me still?
With me one little year ago: —
The chill weight of the winter snow
  For months upon her grave has lain;
And now, when summer south-winds blow
  And brier and harebell bloom again,
I tread the pleasant paths we trod,
I see the violet-sprinkled sod
Whereon she leaned, too frail and weak
The hillside flowers she loved to seek,
Yet following me where'er I went
With dark eyes full of love's content.
The birds are glad; the brier-rose fills
The air with sweetness; all the hills
Stretch green to June's unclouded sky;
But still I wait with ear and eye
For something gone which should be nigh,
A loss in all familiar things,
In flower that blooms, and bird that sings.
And yet, dear heart! remembering thee,
  Am I not richer than of old?
Safe in thy immortality,

What change can reach the wealth I hold?
What chance can mar the pearl and gold
Thy love hath left in trust with me?
And while in life's late afternoon,
Where cool and long the shadows grow,
I walk to meet the night that soon
Shall shape and shadow overflow.
I cannot feel that thou art far,
Since near at need the angels are;
And when the sunset gates unbar,
Shall I not see thee waiting stand,
And, white against the evening star,
The welcome of thy beckoning hand?

Brisk wielder of the birch and rule,
The master of the district school°
Held at the fire his favored place,
Its warm glow lit a laughing face
Fresh-hued and fair, where scarce appeared
The uncertain prophecy of beard.
He teased the mitten-blinded cat,
Played cross-pins on my uncle's hat,
Sang songs, and told us what befalls
In classic Dartmouth's college halls.
Born the wild Northern hills among,
From whence his yeoman father wrung
By patient toil subsistence scant,
Not competence and yet not want,
He early gained the power to pay
His cheerful, self-reliant way;
Could doff at ease his scholar's gown
To peddle wares from town to town;
Or through the long vacation's reach

In lonely lowland districts teach,
Where all the droll experience found
At stranger hearths in boarding round,
The moonlit skater's keen delight,
The sleigh-drive through the frosty night,
The rustic party, with its rough
Accompaniment of blind-man's-buff,
And whirling plate, and forfeits paid,
His winter task a pastime made.
Happy the snow-locked homes wherein
He tuned his merry violin,
Or played the athlete in the barn,
Or held the good dame's winding yarn,
Or mirth-provoking versions told
Of classic legends rare and old,
Wherein the scenes of Greece and Rome
Had all the commonplace of home,
And little seemed at best the odds
'Twixt Yankee pedlers and old gods;
Where Pindus-born Araxes° took
The guise of any grist-mill brook,
And dread Olympus at his will
Became a huckleberry hill.

A careless boy that night he seemed;
  But at his desk he had the look
And air of one who wisely schemed,
  And hostage from the future took
  In trainèd thought and lore of book.
Large-brained, clear-eyed, — of such as he
Shall Freedom's young apostles be,
Who, following in War's bloody trail,
Shall every lingering wrong assail;

All chains from limb and spirit strike,
Uplift the black and white alike;
Scatter before their swift advance
The darkness and the ignorance,
The pride, the lust, the squalid sloth,
Which nurtured Treason's monstrous growth,
Made murder pastime, and the hell
Of prison-torture possible;
The cruel lie of caste refute,
Old forms remould, and substitute
For Slavery's lash the freeman's will,
For blind routine, wise-handed skill;
A school-house plant on every hill,
Stretching in radiate nerve-lines thence
The quick wires of intelligence;
Till North and South together brought
Shall own the same electric thought,
In peace a common flag salute,
And, side by side in labor's free
And unresentful rivalry,
Harvest the fields wherein they fought.

Another guest° that winter night
Flashed back from lustrous eyes the light.
Unmarked by time, and yet not young,
The honeyed music of her tongue
And words of meekness scarcely told
A nature passionate and bold,
Strong, self-concentred, spurning guide,
Its milder features dwarfed beside
Her unbent will's majestic pride.
She sat among us, at the best,
A not unfeared, half-welcome guest,

Rebuking with her cultured phrase
Our homeliness of words and ways.
A certain pard-like, treacherous grace
Swayed the lithe limbs and drooped the lash,
Lent the white teeth their dazzling flash;
And under low brows, black with night,
Rayed out at times a dangerous light;
The sharp heat-lightnings of her face
Presaging ill to him whom Fate
Condemned to share her love or hate.
A woman tropical, intense
In thought and act, in soul and sense,
She blended in a like degree
The vixen and the devotee,
Revealing with each freak or feint
The temper of Petruchio's Kate,°
The raptures of Siena's saint.°
Her tapering hand and rounded wrist
Had facile power to form a fist;
The warm, dark languish of her eyes
Was never safe from wrath's surprise.
Brows saintly calm and lips devout
Knew every change of scowl and pout;
And the sweet voice had notes more high
And shrill for social battle-cry.
Since then what old cathedral town
Has missed her pilgrim staff and gown,
What convent-gate has held its lock
Against the challenge of her knock!
Through Smyrna's° plague-hushed thoroughfares,
Up sea-set Malta's° rocky stairs,
Gray olive slopes of hills that hem
Thy tombs and shrines, Jerusalem,

Or startling on her desert throne
The crazy Queen of Lebanon°
With claims fantastic as her own,
Her tireless feet have held their way;
And still, unrestful, bowed, and gray,
She watches under Eastern skies,
With hope each day renewed and fresh,
The Lord's quick coming in the flesh,
Whereof she dreams and prophesies!
Where'er her troubled path may be,
The Lord's sweet pity with her go!
The outward wayward life we see,
The hidden springs we may not know.
Nor is it given us to discern
What threads the fatal sisters spun,
Through what ancestral years has run
The sorrow with the woman born,
What forged her cruel chain of moods,
What set her feet in solitudes,
And held the love within her mute,
What mingled madness in the blood,
A life-long discord and annoy,
Water of tears with oil of joy,
And hid within the folded bud
Perversities of flower and fruit.
It is not ours to separate
The tangled skein of will and fate,
To show what metes and bounds should stand
Upon the soul's debatable land,
And between choice and Providence
Divide the circle of events;
But He who knows our frame is just,
Merciful, and compassionate,

And full of sweet assurances
And hope for all the language is,
  That He remembereth we are dust!

At last the great logs, crumbling low,
Sent out a dull and duller glow,
The bull's-eye watch that hung in view,
Ticking its weary circuit through,
Pointed with mutely-warning sign
Its black hand to the hour of nine.
That sign the pleasant circle broke:
My uncle ceased his pipe to smoke,
Knocked from its bowl the refuse gray
And laid it tenderly away,
Then roused himself to safely cover
The dull red brands with ashes over.
And while, with care, our mother laid
The work aside, her steps she stayed
One moment, seeking to express
Her grateful sense of happiness
For food and shelter, warmth and health,
And love's contentment more than wealth,
With simple wishes (not the weak,
Vain prayers which no fulfilment seek,
But such as warm the generous heart,
O'er-prompt to do with Heaven its part)
That none might lack, that bitter night,
For bread and clothing, warmth and light.

Within our beds awhile we heard
The wind that round the gables roared,
With now and then a ruder shock,
Which made our very bedsteads rock.

We heard the loosened clapboards tost,
The board-nails snapping in the frost;
And on us, through the unplastered wall,
Felt the light sifted snow-flakes fall.
But sleep stole on, as sleep will do
When hearts are light and life is new;
Faint and more faint the murmurs grew,
Till in the summer-land of dreams
They softened to the sound of streams,
Low stir of leaves, and dip of oars,
And lapsing waves on quiet shores.

Next morn we wakened with the shout
Of merry voices high and clear;
And saw the teamsters drawing near
To break the drifted highways out.
Down the long hillside treading slow
We saw the half-buried oxen go,
Shaking the snow from heads uptost,
Their straining nostrils white with frost.
Before our door the straggling train
Drew up, an added team to gain.
The elders threshed their hands a-cold,
  Passed, with the cider-mug, their jokes
  From lip to lip; the younger folks
Down the loose snow-banks, wrestling, rolled,
Then toiled again the cavalcade
  O'er windy hill, through clogged ravine,
  And woodland paths that wound between
Low drooping pine-boughs winter-weighed.
From every barn a team afoot,
At every house a new recruit,
Where, drawn by Nature's subtlest law,

Haply the watchful young men saw
Sweet doorway pictures of the curls
And curious eyes of merry girls,
Lifting their hands in mock defence
Against the snow-ball's compliments,
And reading in each missive tost
The charm with Eden never lost.

We heard once more the sleigh-bells' sound;
And, following where the teamsters led,
The wise old Doctor went his round,
Just pausing at our door to say,
In the brief autocratic way
Of one who, prompt at Duty's call,
Was free to urge her claim on all,
That some poor neighbor sick abed
At night our mother's aid would need.
For, one in generous thought and deed,
What mattered in the sufferer's sight
The Quaker matron's inward light,
The Doctor's mail of Calvin's creed°?
All hearts confess the saints elect
Who, twain in faith, in love agree,
And melt not in an acid sect
The Christian pearl of charity!

So days went on: a week had passed
Since the great world was heard from last.
The Almanac we studied o'er,
Read and reread our little store
Of books and pamphlets, scarce a score;
One harmless novel, mostly hid
From younger eyes, a book forbid,
And poetry, (or good or bad,

A single book was all we had,)
Where Ellwood's° meek, drab-skirted Muse,
A stranger to the heathen Nine,
Sang, with a somewhat nasal whine,
The wars of David and the Jews.
At last the floundering carrier bore
The village paper to our door.
Lo! broadening outward as we read,
To warmer zones the horizon spread;
In panoramic length unrolled
We saw the marvels that it told.
Before us passed the painted Creeks,°
And daft M'Gregor° on his raids
In Costa Rica's everglades.
And up Taygetos° winding slow
Rode Ypsilanti's Mainote Greeks,
A Turk's head at each saddle bow!
Welcome to us its week-old news,
Its corner for the rustic Muse,
Its monthly gauge of snow and rain,
Its record, mingling in a breath
The wedding knell and dirge of death:
Jest, anecdote, and love-lorn tale,
The latest culprit sent to jail;
Its hue and cry of stolen and lost,
Its vendue sales and goods at cost,
And traffic calling loud for gain.
We felt the stir of hall and street,
The pulse of life that round us beat;
The chill embargo of the snow
Was melted in the genial glow;
Wide swung again our ice-locked door,
And all the world was ours once more!

Clasp, Angel of the backward look
And folded wings of ashen gray
And voice of echoes far away,
The brazen covers of thy book;
The weird palimpsest old and vast,
Wherein thou hid'st the spectral past;
Where, closely mingling, pale and glow
The characters of joy and woe;
The monographs of outlived years,
Or smile-illumed or dim with tears,
Green hills of life that slope to death,
And haunts of home, whose vistaed trees
Shade off to mournful cypresses
With the white amaranths underneath.
Even while I look, I can but heed
The restless sands' incessant fall,
Importunate hours that hours succeed,
Each clamorous with its own sharp need,
And duty keeping pace with all.
Shut down and clasp the heavy lids;
I hear again the voice that bids
The dreamer leave his dream midway
For larger hopes and graver fears:
Life greatens in these later years,
The century's aloe flowers to-day!

Yet, haply, in some lull of life,
Some Truce of God° which breaks its strife,
The worldling's eyes shall gather dew,
Dreaming in throngful city ways
Of winter joys his boyhood knew;
And dear and early friends — the few
Who yet remain — shall pause to view

These Flemish pictures° of old days;
Sit with me by the homestead hearth,
And stretch the hands of memory forth
To warm them at the wood-fire's blaze!
And thanks untraced to lips unknown
Shall greet me like the odors blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air.

SONGS OF LABOR

[1850]

DEDICATION

I WOULD the gift I offer here
  Might graces from thy favor take,
And, seen through Friendship's atmosphere,
On softened lines and coloring, wear
The unaccustomed light of beauty, for thy sake.

Few leaves of Fancy's spring remain:
  But what I have I give to thee, —
The o'er-sunned bloom of summer's plain,
And paler flowers, the latter rain
Calls from the westering slope of life's autumnal lea.

Above the fallen groves of green,
  Where youth's enchanted forest stood,
Dry root and mossèd trunk between,
A sober after-growth is seen,
As springs the pine where falls the gay-leafed maple wood!

Yet birds will sing, and breezes play
  Their leaf-harps in the sombre tree;

And through the bleak and wintry day
It keeps its steady green alway,
So, even my after-thoughts may have a charm for thee.

Art's perfect forms no moral need —
And beauty is its own excuse°;
But for the dull and flowerless weed
Some healing virtue still must plead,
And the rough ore must find its honors in its use.

So haply these, my simple lays
Of homely toil, may serve to show
The orchard bloom and tasselled maize
That skirt and gladden duty's ways,
The unsung beauty hid life's common things below.

Haply from them the toiler, bent
Above his forge or plough, may gain
A manlier spirit of content,
And feel that life is wisest spent
Where the strong working hand makes strong the working brain.

The doom which to the guilty pair
Without the walls of Eden came,
Transforming sinless ease to care
And rugged toil, no more shall bear
The burden of old crime, or mark of primal shame.

A blessing now, — a curse no more;
Since He, whose name we breathe with awe,
The coarse mechanic vesture wore, —
A poor man toiling with the poor,
In labor, as in prayer, fulfilling the same law.

THE SHIPBUILDERS°

The sky is ruddy in the east,
The earth is gray below,
And, spectral in the river-mist,
The ship's white timbers show.
Then let the sounds of measured stroke
And grating saw begin;
The broad axe to the gnarlèd oak,
The mallet to the pin!

Hark! — roars the bellows, blast on blast,
The sooty smithy jars,
And fire-sparks, rising far and fast,
Are fading with the stars.
All day for us the smith shall stand
Beside that flashing forge;
All day for us his heavy hand
The groaning anvil scourge.

From far-off hills the panting team
For us is toiling near;
For us the raftsmen down the stream
Their island barges steer.
Rings out for us the axe-man's stroke
In forests old and still, —
For us the century-circled oak
Falls crashing down his hill.

Up! — up! — in nobler toil than ours
No craftsmen bear a part:
We make of Nature's giant powers
The slaves of human Art.

Lay rib to rib and beam to beam,
And drive the treenails free;
Nor faithless joint nor yawning seam
Shall tempt the searching sea!

Where'er the keel of our good ship
The sea's rough field shall plough, —
Where'er her tossing spars shall drip
With salt-spray caught below, —
That ship must heed her master's beck,
Her helm obey his hand,
And seamen tread her reeling deck
As if they trod the land.

Her oaken ribs the vulture-beak
Of Northern ice may peel;
The sunken rock and coral peak
May grate along her keel;
And know we well the painted shell
We give to wind and wave,
Must float, the sailor's citadel,
Or, sink, the sailor's grave!

Ho! — strike away the bars and blocks,
And set the good ship free!
Why lingers on these dusty rocks
The young bride of the sea?
Look! how she moves adown the grooves,
In graceful beauty now!
How lowly on the breast she loves
Sinks down her virgin prow!

God bless her! wheresoe'er the breeze
Her snowy wing shall fan,

Aside, the frozen Hebrides,°
Or sultry Hindostan!
Where'er, in mart or on the main,
With peaceful flag unfurled,
She helps to wind the silken chain
Of commerce round the world!

Speed on the ship! — But let her bear
No merchandise of sin,
No groaning cargo of despair
Her roomy hold within;
No Lethean drug° for Eastern lands,
Nor poison-draught for ours;
But honest fruits of toiling hands
And Nature's sun and showers.

Be hers the Prairie's golden grain,
The Desert's golden sand,
The clustered fruits of sunny Spain,
The spice of Morning-land!
Her pathway on the open main
May blessings follow free,
And glad hearts welcome back again
Her white sails from the sea!

THE SHOEMAKERS

Ho! workers of the old time styled
The Gentle Craft of Leather°!
Young brothers of the ancient guild,
Stand forth once more together!
Call out again your long array,

In the olden merry manner!
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's° day,
Fling out your blazoned banner!

Rap, rap! upon the well-worn stone
How falls the polished hammer!
Rap, rap! the measured sound has grown
A quick and merry clamor.
Now shape the sole! now deftly curl
The glossy vamp around it,
And bless the while the bright-eyed girl
Whose gentle fingers bound it!

For you, along the Spanish main°
A hundred keels are ploughing;
For you, the Indian on the plain
His lasso-coil is throwing;
For you, deep glens with hemlock dark
The woodman's fire is lighting;
For you, upon the oak's gray bark,
The woodman's axe is smiting.

For you, from Carolina's pine
The rosin-gum is stealing;
For you, the dark-eyed Florentine°
Her silken skein is reeling;
For you, the dizzy goatherd roams
His rugged Alpine ledges;
For you, round all her shepherd homes,
Bloom England's thorny hedges.

The foremost still, by day or night,
On moated mound or heather,

Where'er the need of trampled right
Brought toiling men together;
Where the free burghers from the wall
Defied the mail-clad master,
Than yours, at Freedom's trumpet-call,
No craftsman rallied faster.

Let foplings sneer, let fools deride, —
Ye heed no idle scorner;
Free hands and hearts are still your pride,
And duty done, your honor.
Ye dare to trust, for honest fame,
The jury Time empanels,
And leave to truth each noble name
Which glorifies your annals.

Thy songs, Han Sachs,° are living yet,
In strong and hearty German;
And Bloomfield's ° lay, and Gifford's wit,°
And patriot fame of Sherman°;
Still from his book, a mystic seer,
The soul of Behmen° teaches,
And England's priestcraft shakes to hear
Of Fox's ° leathern breeches.

The foot is yours; where'er it falls,
It treads your well-wrought leather,
On earthen floor, in marble halls,
On carpet, or on heather.
Still there the sweetest charm is found
Of matron grace or vestal's,
As Hebe's° foot bore nectar round,
Among the old celestials!

Rap, rap! — your stout and bluff brogan,
With footsteps slow and weary,
May wander where the sky's blue span
Shuts down upon the prairie.
On Beauty's foot your slippers glance,
By Saratoga's° fountains,
Or twinkle down the summer dance
Beneath the Crystal Mountains°!

The red brick to the mason's hand,
The brown earth to the tiller's,
The shoe in yours shall wealth command,
Like fairy Cinderella's!
As they who shunned the household maid
Beheld the crown upon her,
So all shall see your toil repaid
With hearth and home and honor.

Then let the toast be freely quaffed,
In water cool and brimming, —
"All honor to the good old Craft,
Its merry men and women!"
Call out again your long array,
In the old time's pleasant manner:
Once more, on gay St. Crispin's day,
Fling out his blazoned banner!

THE DROVERS

Through heat and cold, and shower and sun,
Still onward cheerly driving!
There's life alone in duty done,
And rest alone in striving.

But see! the day is closing cool,
The woods are dim before us;
The white fog of the wayside pool
Is creeping slowly o'er us.

The night is falling, comrades mine,
Our footsore beasts are weary,
And through yon elms the tavern sign
Looks out upon us cheery.
The landlord beckons from his door,
His beechen fire is glowing;
These ample barns, with feed in store,
Are filled to overflowing.

From many a valley frowned across
By brows of rugged mountains;
From hillsides where, through spongy moss,
Gush out the river fountains;
From quiet farm-fields, green and low,
And bright with blooming clover;
From vales of corn the wandering crow
No richer hovers over;

Day after day our way has been,
O'er many a hill and hollow;
By lake and stream, by wood and glen,
Our stately drove we follow.
Through dust-clouds rising thick and dun,
As smoke of battle o'er us,
Their white horns glisten in the sun,
Like plumes and crests before us.

We see them slowly climb the hill,
As slow behind it sinking;
Or, thronging close, from roadside rill,
Or sunny lakelet, drinking.

Now crowding in the narrow road,
In thick and struggling masses,
They glare upon the teamster's load,
Or rattling coach that passes.

Anon, with toss of horn and tail,
And paw of hoof, and bellow,
They leap some farmer's broken pale,
O'er meadow-close or fallow.
Forth comes the startled goodman; forth
Wife, children, house-dog, sally;
Till once more on their dusty path
The baffled truants rally.

We drive no starvelings, scraggy grown,
Loose-legged, and ribbed and bony,
Like those who grind their noses down
On pastures bare and stony, —
Lank oxen, rough as Indian dogs,
And cows too lean for shadows,
Disputing feebly with the frogs
The crop of saw-grass meadows!

In our good drove, so sleek and fair,
No bones of leanness rattle;
No tottering hide-bound ghosts are there,
Or Pharaoh's evil cattle.°
Each stately beeve bespeaks the hand
That fed him unrepining;
The fatness of a goodly land
In each dun hide is shining.

We've sought them where, in warmest nooks,
The freshest feed is growing,

By sweetest springs and clearest brooks
Through honeysuckle flowing;
Wherever hillsides, sloping south,
Are bright with early grasses,
Or, tracking green the lowland's drouth,
The mountain streamlet passes.

But now the day is closing cool,
The woods are dim before us,
The white fog of the wayside pool
Is creeping slowly o'er us.
The cricket to the frog's bassoon
His shrillest time is keeping;
The sickle of yon setting moon
The meadow-mist is reaping.

The night is falling, comrades mine,
Our footsore beasts are weary,
And through yon elms the tavern sign
Looks out upon us cheery.
To-morrow, eastward with our charge
We'll go to meet the dawning,
Ere yet the pines of Kéarsarge
Have seen the sun of morning.

When snow-flakes o'er the frozen earth,
Instead of birds, are flitting;
When children throng the glowing hearth,
And quiet wives are knitting;
While in the fire-light strong and clear
Young eyes of pleasure glisten,
To tales of all we see and hear
The ears of home shall listen.

By many a Northern lake and hill,
From many a mountain pasture,
Shall Fancy play the Drover still,
And speed the long night faster.
Then let us on, through shower and sun,
And heat and cold, be driving;
There's life alone in duty done,
And rest alone in striving.

THE FISHERMEN

Hurrah! the seaward breezes
Sweep down the bay amain;
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!
Run up the sail again!
Leave to the lubber landsmen
The rail-car and the steed;
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed.

From the hill-top looks the steeple,
And the lighthouse from the sand;
And the scattered pines are waving
Their farewell from the land.
One glance, my lads, behind us,
For the homes we leave one sigh,
Ere we take the change and chances
Of the ocean and the sky.

Now, brothers, for the icebergs
Of frozen Labrador,
Floating spectral in the moonshine,
Along, the low, black shore!

Where like snow the gannet's feathers
On Brador's° rocks are shed,
And the noisy murr are flying,
Like black scuds, overhead;

Where in mist the rock is hiding,
And the sharp reef lurks below,
And the white squall smites in summer,
And the autumn tempests blow;
Where, through gray and rolling vapor,
From evening unto morn,
A thousand boats are hailing,
Horn answering unto horn.

Hurrah! for the Red Island,°
With the white cross on its crown!
Hurrah! for Meccatina,°
And its mountains bare and brown!
Where the caribou's tall antlers
O'er the dwarf-wood freely toss,
And the footstep of the Mickmack°
Has no sound upon the moss.

There we'll drop our lines, and gather
Old Ocean's treasures in,
Where'er the mottled mackerel
Turns up a steel-dark fin.
The sea's our field of harvest,
Its scaly tribes our grain;
We'll reap the teeming waters
As at home they reap the plain!

Our wet hands spread the carpet,
And light the hearth of home;

From our fish, as in the old time,
The silver coin shall come.
As the demon fled the chamber
Where the fish of Tobit° lay,
So ours from all our dwellings
Shall frighten Want away.

Though the mist upon our jackets
In the bitter air congeals,
And our lines wind stiff and slowly
From off the frozen reels;
Though the fog be dark around us,
And the storm blow high and loud,
We will whistle down the wild wind,
And laugh beneath the cloud!

In the darkness as in daylight,
On the water as on land,
God's eye is looking on us,
And beneath us is His hand!
Death will find us soon or later,
On the deck or in the cot;
And we cannot meet him better
Than in working out our lot.

Hurrah! — hurrah! — the west-wind
Comes freshening down the bay,
The rising sails are filling, —
Give way, my lads, give way!
Leave the coward landsman clinging
To the dull earth, like a weed, —
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed!

THE HUSKERS

It was late in mild October, and the long autumnal rain
Had left the summer harvest-fields all green with grass again;
The first sharp frosts had fallen, leaving all the woodlands gay
With the hues of summer's rainbow, or the meadow-flowers of May.

Through a thin, dry mist, that morning, the sun rose broad and red,
At first a rayless disk of fire he brightened as he sped;
Yet, even his noontide glory fell chastened and subdued,
On the cornfields and the orchards, and softly pictured wood.

And all that quiet afternoon, slow sloping to the night,
He wove with golden shuttle the haze with yellow light;
Slanting through the painted beeches, he glorified the hill;
And, beneath it, pond and meadow lay brighter, greener still.

And shouting boys in woodland haunts caught glimpses of that sky,
Flecked by the many-tinted leaves, and laughed, they knew not why;
And school-girls, gay with aster-flowers, beside the meadow brooks,
Mingled the glow of autumn with the sunshine of sweet looks.

From spire and barn looked westerly the patient
weathercocks;
But even the birches on the hill stood motionless as
rocks.
No sound was in the woodlands, save the squirrel's
dropping shell,
And the yellow leaves among the boughs, low rustling
as they fell.

The summer grains were harvested; the stubble-fields
lay dry,
Where June winds rolled, in light and shade, the pale
green waves of rye;
But still, on gentle hill-slopes, in valleys fringed with
wood,
Ungathered, bleaching in the sun, the heavy corn crop
stood.

Bent low, by autumn's wind and rain, through husks
that, dry and sear,
Unfolded from their ripened charge, shone out the
yellow ear;
Beneath, the turnip lay concealed, in many a verdant
fold,
And glistened in the slanting light the pumpkin's
sphere of gold.

There wrought the busy harvesters; and many a
creaking wain
Bore slowly to the long barn-floor its load of husk and
grain;
Till broad and red, as when he rose, the sun sank down
at last,

And like a merry guest's farewell, the day in brightness passed.

And lo! as through the western pines, on meadow, stream, and pond,
Flamed the red radiance of a sky, set all afire beyond,
Slowly o'er the eastern sea-bluffs a milder glory shone,
And the sunset and the moonrise were mingled into one!

As thus into the quiet night the twilight lapsed away,
And deeper in the brightening moon the tranquil shadows lay;
From many a brown old farm-house, and hamlet without name,
Their milking and their home-tasks done, the merry huskers came.

Swung o'er the heaped-up harvest, from pitchforks in the mow,
Shone dimly down the lanterns on the pleasant scene below;
The growing pile of husks behind, the golden ears before,
And laughing eyes and busy hands and brown cheeks glimmering o'er.

Half hidden in a quiet nook, serene of look and heart,
Talking their old times over, the old men sat apart;
While, up and down the unhusked pile, or nestling in its shade,
At hide-and-seek, with laugh and shout, the happy children played.

Urged by the good host's daughter, a maiden young and fair,
Lifting to light her sweet blue eyes and pride of soft brown hair,
The master of the village school, sleek of hair and smooth of tongue,
To the quaint tune of some old psalm, a husking-ballad sung.

THE CORN-SONG

HEAP high the farmer's wintry hoard!
Heap high the golden corn!
No richer gift has Autumn poured
From out her lavish horn!

Let other lands, exulting, glean
The apple from the pine,
The orange from its glossy green,
The cluster from the vine;

We better love the hardy gift
Our rugged vales bestow,
To cheer us when the storm shall drift
Our harvest-fields with snow.

Through vales of grass and meads of flowers,
Our ploughs their furrows made,
While on the hills the sun and showers
Of changeful April played.

We dropped the seed o'er hill and plain,
Beneath the sun of May,

And frightened from our sprouting grain
The robber crows away.

All through the long, bright days of June
Its leaves grew green and fair,
And waved in hot midsummer's noon
Its soft and yellow hair.

And now, with autumn's moonlit eves,
Its harvest-time has come,
We pluck away the frosted leaves,
And bear the treasure home.

There, richer than the fabled gift
Apollo showered of old,
Fair hands the broken grain shall sift,
And knead its meal of gold.

Let vapid idlers loll in silk
Around their costly board;
Give us the bowl of samp and milk,
By homespun beauty poured!

Where'er the wide old kitchen hearth
Sends up its smoky curls,
Who will not thank the kindly earth,
And bless our farmer girls?

Then shame on all the proud and vain,
Whose folly laughs to scorn
The blessing of our hardy grain,
Our wealth of golden corn!

Let earth withhold her goodly root,
Let mildew blight the rye,
Give to the worm the orchard's fruit,
The wheat-field to the fly:

But let the good old crop adorn
The hills our fathers trod;
Still let us, for His golden corn,
Send up our thanks to God!

THE LUMBERMEN

WILDLY round our woodland quarters,
Sad-voiced Autumn grieves;
Thickly down these swelling waters
Float his fallen leaves.
Through the tall and naked timber,
Column-like and old,
Gleam the sunsets of November,
From their skies of gold.

O'er us, to the southland heading,
Screams the gray wild-goose;
On the night-frost sounds the treading
Of the brindled moose.
Noiseless creeping, while we're sleeping
Frost his task-work plies;
Soon, his icy bridges heaping,
Shall our log-piles rise.

When, with sounds of smothered thunder,
On some night of rain,
Lake and river break asunder

Winter's weakened chain,
Down the wild March flood shall bear them
To the saw-mill's wheel,
Or where Steam, the slave, shall tear them
With his teeth of steel.

Be it starlight, be it moonlight,
In these vales below,
When the earliest beams of sunlight
Streak the mountain's snow,
Crisps the hoar-frost, keen and early,
To our hurrying feet,
And the forest echoes clearly
All our blows repeat.

Where the crystal Ambijejis
Stretches broad and clear,
And Millnoket's pine-black ridges
Hide the browsing deer:
Where, through lakes and wide morasses,
Or through rocky walls,
Swift and strong, Penobscot passes
White with foamy falls;

Where, through clouds, are glimpses given
Of Katahdin's sides,° —
Rock and forest piled to heaven,
Torn and ploughed by slides!
Far below, the Indian trapping,
In the sunshine warm;
Far above, the snow-cloud wrapping
Half the peak in storm!

Where are mossy carpets better
Than the Persian weaves,
And than Eastern perfumes sweeter
Seem the fading leaves;
And a music wild and solemn,
From the pine-tree's height,
Rolls its vast and sea-like volume
On the wind of night;

Make we here our camp of winter;
And, through sleet and snow,
Pitchy knot and beechen splinter
On our hearth shall glow,
Here, with mirth to lighten duty,
We shall lack alone
Woman's smile and girlhood's beauty,
Childhood's lisping tone.

But their hearth is brighter burning
For our toil to-day;
And the welcome of returning
Shall our loss repay.
When, like seamen from the waters,
From the woods we come,
Greeting sisters, wives, and daughters,
Angels of our home!

Not for us the measured ringing
From the village spire,
Not for us the Sabbath singing
Of the sweet-voiced choir:
Ours the old, majestic temple,
Where God's brightness shines

Down the dome so grand and ample,
Propped by lofty pines!

Through each branch-enwoven skylight
Speaks He in the breeze,
As of old beneath the twilight
Of lost Eden's trees!
For His ear, the inward feeling
Needs no outward tongue:
He can see the spirit kneeling
While the axe is swung.

Heeding truth alone, and turning
From the false and dim,
Lamp of toil or altar burning
Are alike to Him.
Strike, then, comrades! — Trade is waiting
On our rugged toil;
Far ships waiting for the freighting
Of our woodland spoil!

Ships, whose traffic links these highlands,
Bleak and cold, of ours,
With the citron-planted islands
Of a clime of flowers;
To our frosts the tribute bringing
Of eternal heats;
In our lap of winter flinging
Tropic fruits and sweets.

Cheerly, on the axe of labor,
Let the sunbeams dance,
Better than the flash of sabre
Or the gleam of lance!

Strike! — With every blow is given
Freer sun and sky,
And the long-hid earth to heaven
Looks, with wondering eye!

Loud behind us grow the murmurs
Of the age to come;
Clang of smiths, and tread of farmers,
Bearing harvest home!
Here her virgin lap with treasures
Shall the green earth fill;
Waving wheat and golden maize-ears
Crown each beechen hill.

Keep who will the city's alleys,
Take the smooth-shorn plain, —
Give to us the cedar valleys,
Rocks, and hills of Maine!
In our North-land, wild and woody,
Let us still have part:
Rugged nurse and mother sturdy,
Hold us to thy heart!

Oh, our free hearts beat the warmer
For thy breath of snow;
And our tread is all the firmer
For thy rocks below.
Freedom, hand in hand with Labor,
Walketh strong and brave;
On the forehead of his neighbor
No man writeth Slave!

Lo, the day breaks! old Katahdin's
Pine-trees show its fires,

While from these dim forest gardens
Rise their blackened spires.
Up, my comrades! up and doing!
Manhood's rugged play
Still renewing, bravely hewing
Through the world our way!

BALLADS AND NARRATIVE POEMS

CASSANDRA SOUTHWICK°

1658

To the God of all sure mercies let my blessing rise today,
From the scoffer and the cruel He hath plucked the spoil away, —
Yea, He who cooled the furnace around the faithful three,
And tamed the Chaldean lions,° hath set His handmaid free!

Last night I saw the sunset melt through my prison bars,
Last night across my damp earth-floor fell the pale gleam of stars;
In the coldness and the darkness all through the long night-time,
My grated casement whitened with autumn's early rime.

Alone, in that dark sorrow, hour after hour crept by;
Star after star looked palely in and sank adown the sky;
No sound amid night's stillness, save that which seemed to be
The dull and heavy beating of the pulses of the sea;

All night I sat unsleeping, for I knew that on the morrow
The ruler and the cruel priest would mock me in my sorrow,
Dragged to their place of market, and bargained for and sold,
Like a lamb before the shambles, like a heifer from the fold!

Oh, the weakness of the flesh was there, — the shrinking and the shame;
And the low voice of the Tempter like whispers to me came:
"Why sit'st thou thus forlornly!" the wicked murmur said,
"Damp walls thy bower of beauty, cold earth thy maiden bed?

"Where be the smiling faces, and voices soft and sweet,
Seen in thy father's dwelling, heard in the pleasant street?
Where be the youths whose glances, the summer Sabbath through,
Turned tenderly and timidly unto thy father's pew?

"Why sit'st thou here, Cassandra? — Bethink thee with what mirth

Thy happy schoolmates gather around the warm bright hearth;
How the crimson shadows tremble on foreheads white and fair,
On eyes of merry girlhood, half hid in golden hair.

"Not for thee the hearth-fire brightens, not for thee kind words are spoken,
Not for thee the nuts of Wenham° woods by laughing boys are broken,
No first-fruits of the orchard within thy lap are laid,
For thee no flowers of autumn the youthful hunters braid.

"Oh, weak, deluded maiden! — by crazy fancies led,
With wild and raving railers an evil path to tread;
To leave a wholesome worship, and teaching pure and sound;
And mate with maniac women, loose-haired and sackcloth bound.

"Mad scoffers of the priesthood, who mock at things divine,
Who rail against the pulpit, and holy bread and wine;
Sore from their cart-tail scourgings, and from the pillory lame,
Rejoicing in their wretchedness, and glorying in their shame.

"And what a fate awaits thee? — a sadly toiling slave,
Dragging the slowly lengthening chain of bondage to the grave!
Think of thy woman's nature, subdued in hopeless thrall,
The easy prey of any, the scoff and scorn of all!"

Oh, ever as the Tempter spoke, and feeble Nature's fears
Wrung drop by drop the scalding flow of unavailing tears,
I wrestled down the evil thoughts, and strove in silent prayer,
To feel, O Helper of the weak! that Thou indeed wert there!

I thought of Paul and Silas, within Philippi's cell,°
And how from Peter's sleeping limbs° the prison-shackles fell,
Till I seemed to hear the trailing of an angel's robe of white,
And to feel a blessed presence invisible to sight.

Bless the Lord for all His mercies! — for the peace and love I felt,
Like dew of Hermon's holy hill,° upon my spirit melt;
When "Get behind me, Satan!" was the language of my heart,
And I felt the Evil Tempter with all his doubts depart.

Slow broke the gray cold morning; again the sunshine fell,
Flecked with the shade of bar and grate within my lonely cell;
The hoar-frost melted on the wall, and upward from the street
Came careless laugh and idle word, and tread of passing feet.

At length the heavy bolts fell back, my door was open cast,

And slowly at the sheriff's side, up the long street I passed;
I heard the murmur round me, and felt, but dared not see,
How, from every door and window, the people gazed on me.

And doubt and fear fell on me, shame burned upon my cheek,
Swam earth and sky around me, my trembling limbs grew weak:
"O Lord! support Thy handmaid; and from her soul cast out
The fear of man, which brings a snare, — the weakness and the doubt."

Then the dreary shadows scattered, like a cloud in morning's breeze,
And a low deep voice within me seemed whispering words like these:
"Though thy earth be as the iron, and thy heaven a brazen wall,
Trust still His loving-kindness whose power is over all."

We paused at length, where at my feet the sunlit waters broke
On glaring reach of shining beach, and shingly wall of rock;
The merchant-ships lay idly there, in hard clear lines on high,
Tracing with rope and slender spar their network on the sky.

And there were ancient citizens, cloak-wrapped and grave and cold,

And grim and stout sea-captains with faces bronzed and old,
And on his horse, with Rawson, his cruel clerk at hand,
Sat dark and haughty Endicott,° the ruler of the land.

And poisoning with his evil words the ruler's ready ear,
The priest leaned o'er his saddle, with laugh and scoff and jeer;
It stirred my soul, and from my lips the seal of silence broke,
As if through woman's weakness a warning spirit spoke.

I cried, "The Lord rebuke thee, thou smiter of the meek,
Thou robber of the righteous, thou trampler of the weak!
Go light the dark, cold hearth-stones, — go turn the prison lock
Of the poor hearts thou hast hunted, thou wolf amid the flock!"

Dark lowered the brows of Endicott, and with a deeper red
O'er Rawson's wine-empurpled cheek the flush of anger spread;
"Good people," quoth the white-lipped priest, "heed not her words so wild,
Her master speaks within her, — the Devil owns his child!"

But gray heads shook, and young brows knit, the while the sheriff read
That law the wicked rulers against the poor have made,

Who to their house of Rimmon° and idol priesthood bring
No bended knee of worship, nor gainful offering.

Then to the stout sea-captains the sheriff, turning, said, —
"Which of ye, worthy seamen, will take this Quaker maid?
In the Isle of fair Barbadoes, or on Virginia's shore,
You may hold her at a higher price than Indian girl or Moor."

Grim and silent stood the captains; and when again he cried,
"Speak out, my worthy seamen!" — no voice, no sign replied;
But I felt a hard hand press my own, and kind words met my ear, —
"God bless thee, and preserve thee, my gentle girl and dear!"

A weight seemed lifted from my heart, — a pitying friend was nigh,
I felt it in his hard, rough hand, and saw it in his eye;
And when again the sheriff spoke, that voice, so kind to me,
Growled back its stormy answer like the roaring of the sea, —

"Pile my ship with bars of silver, — pack with coins of Spanish gold,
From keel-piece up to deck-plant, the roomage of her hold,

By the living God who made me! — I would sooner in your bay
Sink ship and crew and cargo, than bear this child away!"

"Well answered, worthy captain, shame on their cruel laws!"
Ran through the crowd in murmurs loud the people's just applause.
"Like the herdsman of Tekoa,° in Israel of old,
Shall we see the poor and righteous again for silver sold?"

I looked on haughty Endicott; with weapon halfway drawn,
Swept round the throng his lion glare of bitter hate and scorn;
Fiercely he drew his bridle-rein, and turned in silence back,
And sneering priest and baffled clerk rode murmuring in his track.

Hard after them the sheriff looked, in bitterness of soul;
Thrice smote his staff upon the ground, and crushed his parchment roll.
"Good friends," he said, "since both have fled, the ruler and the priest,
Judge ye, if from their further work I be not well released."

Loud was the cheer which, full and clear, swept round the silent bay,
As, with kind words and kinder looks, he bade me go my way;

For He who turns the courses of the streamlet of the glen,
And the river of great waters, had turned the hearts of men.

Oh, at that hour the very earth seemed changed beneath my eye,
A holier wonder round me rose the blue walls of the sky,
A lovelier light on rock and hill and stream and woodland lay,
And softer lapsed on sunnier sands the waters of the bay.

Thanksgiving to the Lord of life! — to Him all praises be,
Who from the hands of evil men hath set His handmaid free;
All praise to Him before whose power the mighty are afraid,
Who takes the crafty in the snare which for the poor is laid!

Sing, O my soul, rejoicingly, on evening's twilight calm
Uplift the loud thanksgiving, — pour forth the grateful psalm;
Let all dear hearts with me rejoice, as did the saints of old,
When of the Lord's good angel the rescued Peter told.

And weep and howl, ye evil priests and mighty men of wrong,

The Lord shall smite the proud, and lay His hand upon
the strong.
Woe to the wicked rulers in His avenging hour!
Woe to the wolves who seek the flocks to raven and
devour!

But let the humble ones arise, — the poor in heart be
glad;
And let the mourning ones again with robes of praise be
clad,
For He who cooled the furnace, and smoothed the stormy
wave,
And tamed the Chaldean lions, is mighty still to save!

FUNERAL TREE OF THE SOKOKIS

1756

Around Sebago's° lonely lake
There lingers not a breeze to break
The mirror which its waters make.

The solemn pines along its shore,
The firs which hang its gray rocks o'er,
Are painted on its glassy floor.

The sun looks o'er, with hazy eye,
The snowy mountain-tops which lie
Piled coldly up against the sky,

Dazzling and white! save where the bleak,
Wild winds have bared some splintering peak,
Or snow-slide left its dusky streak.

Yet green are Saco's banks below
And belts of spruce and cedar show
Dark, fringing round those cones of snow.

The earth hath felt the breath of spring,
Though yet on her deliverer's wing
The lingering frosts of winter cling.

Fresh grasses fringe the meadow-brooks
And mildly from its sunny nooks
The blue eye of the violet looks.

And odors from the springing grass,
The sweet birch and the sassafras,
Upon the scarce-felt breezes pass.

Her tokens of renewing care
Hath Nature scattered everywhere,
In bud and flower, and warmer air.

But in their hour of bitterness,
What reck the broken Sokokis,
Beside their slaughtered chief, of this?

The turf's red stain is yet undried, —
Scarce have the death-shot echoes died
Along Sebago's wooded side:

And silent now the hunters stand,
Grouped darkly, where a swell of land
Slopes upward from the lake's white sand.

Fire and the axe have swept it bare,
Save one lone beech, unclosing there
Its light leaves in the vernal air.

With grave, cold looks, all sternly mute,
They break the damp turf at its foot,
And bare its coiled and twisted root.

They heave the stubborn trunk aside,
The firm roots from the earth divide, —
The rent beneath yawns dark and wide.

And there the fallen chief is laid,
In tasselled garbs of skins arrayed,
And girded with its wampum-braid.

The silver cross he loved is pressed
Beneath the heavy arms, which rest
Upon his scarred and naked breast.

'Tis done: the roots are backward sent,
The beechen-tree stands up unbent, —
The Indian's fitting monument!

When of that sleeper's broken race
Their green and pleasant dwelling-place,
Which knew them once, retains no trace;

Oh, long may sunset's light be shed
As now upon that beech's head, —
A green memorial of the dead!

There shall his fitting requiem be,
In northern winds, that, cold and free,
Howl nightly in that funeral tree.

To their wild wail the waves which break
For ever round that lonely lake
A solemn undertone shall make!

And who shall deem the spot unblest.
Where Nature's younger children rest,
Lulled on their sorrowing mother's breast?

Deem ye that mother loveth less
These bronzed forms of the wilderness
She foldeth in her long caress?

As sweet o'er them her wild-flowers blow
As if with fairer hair and brow
The blue-eyed Saxon slept below.

What though the places of their rest
No priestly knee hath ever pressed, —
No funeral rite nor prayer hath blessed?

What though the bigot's ban be there,
And thoughts of wailing and despair,
And cursing in the place of prayer!

Yet Heaven hath angels watching round
The Indian's lowliest forest-mound, —
And *they* have made it holy ground.

There ceases man's frail judgment; all
His powerless bolts of cursing fall
Unheeded on that grassy pall.

Oh, peeled, and hunted, and reviled,
Sleep on, dark tenant of the wild!
Great Nature owns her simple child;

And Nature's God, to whom alone
The secret of the heart is known, —
The hidden language traced thereon;

Who from its many cumberings
Of form and creed, and outward things,
To light the naked spirit brings;

Not with our partial eye shall scan,
Not with our pride and scorn shall ban
The spirit of our brother man!

PENTUCKET

1708

How sweetly on the wood-girt town
The mellow light of sunset shone!
Each small, bright lake, whose waters still
Mirror the forest and the hill,
Reflected from its waveless breast
The beauty of a cloudless west,
Glorious as if a glimpse were given
Within the western gates of heaven,
Left, by the spirit of the star
Of sunset's holy hour, ajar!

Beside the river's tranquil flood
The dark and low-walled dwellings stood,
Where many a rood of open land
Stretched up and down on either hand,
With corn-leaves waving freshly green
The thick and blackened stumps between.
Behind, unbroken, deep and dread,
The wild, untravelled forest spread,
Back to those mountains, white and cold,

Of which the Indian trapper told,
Upon whose summits never yet
Was mortal foot in safety set.

Quiet and calm, without a fear
Of danger darkly lurking near,
The weary laborer left his plough, —
The milkmaid carolled by her cow, —
From cottage door and household hearth
Rose songs of praise, or tones of mirth.
At length the murmur died away,
And silence on that village lay, —
So slept Pompeii,° tower and hall,
Ere the quick earthquake swallowed all,
Undreaming of the fiery fate
Which made its dwellings desolate!

Hours passed away. By moonlight sped
The Merrimack along his bed.
Bathed in the pallid lustre, stood
Dark cottage-wall and rock and wood,
Silent, beneath that tranquil beam,
As the hushed grouping of a dream.
Yet on the still air crept a sound, —
No bark of fox, nor rabbit's bound,
Nor stir of wings, nor waters flowing,
Nor leaves in midnight breezes blowing.
Was that the tread of many feet,
Which downward from the hillside beat?
What forms were those which darkly stood
Just on the margin of the wood? —
Charred tree-stumps in the moonlight dim,
Or paling rude, or leafless limb?

No, — through the trees fierce eyeballs glowed,
Dark human forms in moonshine showed,
Wild from their native wilderness,
With painted limbs and battle-dress!

A yell the dead might wake to hear
Swelled on the night air, far and clear, —
Then smote the Indian tomahawk
On crashing door and shattering lock, —
Then rang the rifle-shot, — and then
The shrill death-scream of stricken men, —
Sank the red axe in woman's brain,
And childhood's cry arose in vain, —
Bursting through roof and window came,
Red, fast, and fierce, the kindled flame;
And blended fire and moonlight glared
On still dead men and weapons bared.

The morning sun looked brightly through
The river willows, wet with dew.
No sound of combat filled the air, —
No shout was heard, — nor gunshot there:
Yet still the thick and sullen smoke
From smouldering ruins slowly broke;
And on the greensward many a stain,
And, here and there, the mangled slain,
Told how that midnight bolt had sped,
Pentucket, on thy fated head!
Even now the villager can tell
Where Rolfe beside his hearthstone fell,

Still show the door of wasting oak,
Through which the fatal death-shot broke.

And point the curious stranger where
De Rouville's° corse lay grim and bare, —
Whose hideous head, in death still feared,
Bore not a trace of hair or beard, —
And still, within the churchyard ground,
Heaves darkly up the ancient mound,
Whose grass-grown surface overlies
The victims of that sacrifice.

THE EXILES°

1660

The goodman sat beside his door
One sultry afternoon,
With his young wife singing at his side
An old and goodly tune.

A glimmer of heat was in the air;
The dark green woods were still;
And the skirts of a heavy thunder-cloud
Hung over the western hill.

Black, thick, and vast arose that cloud
Above the wilderness,
As some dark world from upper air
Were stooping over this.

At times the solemn thunder pealed,
And all was still again,

Save a low murmur in the air
Of coming wind and rain.

Just as the first big rain-drop fell,
A weary stranger came,
And stood before the farmer's door,
With travel soiled and lame.

Sad seemed he, yet sustaining hope
Was in his quiet glance,
And peace, like autumn's moonlight, clothed
His tranquil countenance.

A look, like that his Master wore
In Pilate's council hall:
It told of wrongs, — but of a love
Meekly forgiving all.

"Friend! wilt thou give me shelter here?"
The stranger meekly said;
And, leaning on his oaken staff,
The goodman's features read.

"My life is hunted, — evil men
Are following in my track;
The traces of the torturer's whip
Are on my aged back.

"And much, I fear, 'twill peril thee
Within thy doors to take
A hunted seeker of the Truth,
Oppressed for conscience' sake."

Oh, kindly spoke the goodman's wife, —
"Come in, old man!" quoth she, —
"We will not leave thee to the storm,
Whoever thou mayst be."

Then came the aged wanderer in,
And silent sat him down;
While all within grew dark as night
Beneath the storm-cloud's frown.

But while the sudden lightning's blaze
Filled every cottage nook,
And with the jarring thunder-roll
The loosened casements shook,

A heavy tramp of horses' feet
Came sounding up the lane,
And half a score of horse, or more,
Came plunging through the rain.

"Now, Goodman Macey, ope thy door, —
We would not be house-breakers;
A rueful deed thou'st done this day,
In harboring banished Quakers."

Out looked the cautious goodman then
With much of fear and awe,
For there, with broad wig drenched with rain,
The parish priest he saw.

"Open thy door, thou wicked man,
And let thy pastor in,
And give God thanks, if forty stripes
Repay thy deadly sin."

"What seek ye?" quoth the goodman, —
"The stranger is my guest:
He is worn with toil and grievous wrong, —
Pray let the old man rest."

"Now, out upon thee, canting knave!"
And strong hands shook the door.
"Believe me, Macey," quoth the priest, —
"Thou'lt rue thy conduct sore."

Then kindled Macey's eye of fire:
"No priest who walks the earth
Shall pluck away the stranger-guest
Made welcome to my hearth."

Down from his cottage wall he caught
The matchlock, hotly tried
At Prestonpans° and Marston moor,
By fiery Ireton's° side;

Where Puritan,° and Cavalier,
With shout and psalm contended;
And Rupert's° oath, and Cromwell's prayer,
With battle-thunder blended.

Up rose the ancient stranger then:
"My spirit is not free
To bring the wrath and violence
Of evil men on thee:

"And for thyself, I pray forbear, —
Bethink thee of thy Lord,
Who healed again the smitten ear,°
And sheathed His follower's sword.

"I go, as to the slaughter led:
Friends of the poor, farewell!"
Beneath his hand the oaken door
Back on its hinges fell.

"Come forth, old graybeard yea and nay,"
The reckless scoffers cried,
As to a horseman's saddle-bow
The old man's arms were tied.

And of his bondage hard and long
In Boston's crowded jail,
Where suffering woman's prayer was heard,
With sickening childhood's wail,

It suits not with our tale to tell:
Those scenes have passed away, —
Let the dim shadows of the past
Brood o'er that evil day.

"Ho, sheriff!" quoth the ardent priest, —
"Take Goodman Macey too;
The sin of this day's heresy
His back or purse shall rue."

"Now, goodwife, haste thee!" Macey cried,
She caught his manly arm: —
Behind, the parson urged pursuit,
With outcry and alarm.

Ho! speed the Maceys, neck or naught, —
The river course was near: —
The plashing on its pebbled shore
Was music to their ear.

A gray rock, tasselled o'er with birch,
Above the waters hung,
And at its base, with every wave,
A small light wherry swung.

A leap — they gain the boat — and there
The goodman wields his oar:
"Ill luck betide them all," he cried, —
"The laggards upon the shore."

Down through the crashing underwood,
The burly sheriff came: —
"Stand, Goodman Macey, — yield thyself;
Yield in the King's own name."

"Now out upon thy hangman's face!"
Bold Macey answered then, —
"Whip *women*, on the village green,
But meddle not with *men*."

The priest came panting to the shore, —
His grave cocked hat was gone;
Behind him, like some owl's nest, hung
His wig upon a thorn.

"Come back, — come back!" the parson cried,
"The Church's curse beware."
"Curse, an' thou wilt," said Macey, "but
Thy blessing prithee spare."

"Vile scoffer!" cried the baffled priest, —
"Thou'lt yet the gallows see."
"Who's born to be hanged will not be drowned,"
Quoth Macey, merrily;

"And so, sir sheriff and priest, good-by!"
He bent him to his oar,
And the small boat glided quietly
From the twain upon the shore.

Now in the west, the heavy clouds
Scattered and fell asunder,
While feebler came the rush of rain,
And fainter growled the thunder.

And through the broken clouds, the sun
Looked out serene and warm,
Painting its holy symbol-light
Upon the passing storm.

Oh, beautiful! that rainbow span,
O'er dim Crane-neck° was bended; —
One bright foot touched the eastern hills,
And one with ocean blended.

By green Pentucket's southern slope
The small boat glided fast, —
The watchers of "the Block-house" saw
The strangers as they passed.

That night a stalwart garrison
Sat shaking in their shoes,
To hear the dip of Indian oars, —
The glide of birch canoes.

The fisher-wives of Salisbury
(The men were all away)
Looked out to see the stranger oar
Upon their waters play.

Deer Island's rocks and fir-trees threw
Their sunset-shadows o'er them,
And Newbury's spire and weather-cock
Peered o'er the pines before them.

Around the Black Rocks, on their left,
The marsh lay broad and green;
And on their right, with dwarf shrubs crowned,
Plum Island's hills were seen.

With skilful hand and wary eye
The harbour-bar was crossed; —
A plaything of the restless wave,
The boat on ocean tossed.

The glory of the sunset heaven
On land and water lay, —
On the steep hills of Agawam,
On cape, and bluff, and bay.

They passed the gray rocks of Cape Ann,°
And Gloucester's° harbor-bar;
The watch-fire of the garrison
Shone like a setting star.

How brightly broke the morning
On Massachusetts Bay!
Blue wave, and bright green island,
Rejoicing in the day.

On passed the bark in safety
Round isle and headland steep, —
No tempest broke above them,
No fog-cloud veiled the deep.

Far round the bleak and stormy Cape°
The vent'rous Macey passed,
And on Nantucket's° naked isle
Drew up his boat at last.

And how, in log-built cabin,
They braved the rough sea-weather;
And there, in peace and quietness,
Went down life's vale together:

How others drew around them,
And how their fishing sped,
Until to every wind of heaven
Nantucket's sails were spread;

How pale Want alternated
With Plenty's golden smile;
Behold, is it not written
In the annals of the isle?

And yet that isle remaineth
A refuge of the free,
As when true-hearted Macey
Beheld it from the sea.

Free as the winds that winnow
Her shrubless hills of sand, —
Free as the waves that batter
Along her yielding land.

Than hers, at duty's summons,
No loftier spirit stirs, —
Nor falls o'er human suffering
A readier tear than hers.

God bless the sea-beat island! —
And grant for evermore,
That charity and freedom dwell
As now upon her shore!

THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA°

SPEAK and tell us, our Ximena,° looking northward far away,
O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican array,
Who is losing? who is winning? are they far or come they near?
Look abroad, and tell us, sister, whither rolls the storm we hear.

"Down the hills of Angostura still the storm of battle rolls;
Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have mercy on their souls!"
Who is losing? who is winning? — "Over hill and over plain,
I see but smoke of cannon clouding through the mountain rain."

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look, Ximena, look once more.
"Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling darkly as before,
Bearing on, in strange confusion, friend and foeman, foot and horse,
Like some wild and troubled torrent sweeping down its mountain course."

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Ah! the smoke has rolled away;
And I see the Northern rifles gleaming down the ranks of gray.
Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there the troop of Minon wheels;
There the Northern horses thunder, with the cannon at their heels.

"Jesu, pity! how it thickens! now retreat and now advance!
Right against the blazing cannon shivers Puebla's charging lance!
Down they go, the brave young riders; horse and foot together fall;
Like a ploughshare in the fallow, through them ploughs the Northern ball."

Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling fast and frightful on:
Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has lost, and who has won?
"Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe together fall,
O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my sisters, for them all!

"Lo! the wind the smoke is lifting: Blessed Mother, save my brain!
I can see the wounded crawling slowly out from heaps of slain.
Now they stagger, blind and bleeding; now they fall, and strive to rise;
Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest they die before our eyes!

"O my heart's love! O my dear one! lay thy poor head
on my knee:
Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee? Canst thou
hear me? canst thou see?
O my husband, brave and gentle! O my Bernal,
look once more
On the blessed cross before thee! Mercy! mercy!
all is o'er!"

Dry thy tears, my poor Ximena; lay thy dear one down
to rest;
Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the cross upon his
breast;
Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his funeral masses
said:
To-day, thou poor bereaved one, the living ask thy aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and young, a
soldier lay,
Torn with shot and pierced with lances, bleeding slow
his life away;
But, as tenderly before him, the lorn Ximena knelt,
She saw the Northern eagle shining on his pistol-belt.

With a stifled cry of horror straight she turned away
her head;
With a sad and bitter feeling looked she back upon her
dead;
But she heard the youth's low moaning, and his strug-
gling breath of pain,
And she raised the cooling water to his parching lips
again.

Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed her hand and faintly smiled
Was that pitying face his mother's? did she watch beside her child?
All his stranger words with meaning her woman's heart supplied;
With her kiss upon his forehead, "Mother!" murmured he, and died!

"A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who led thee forth,
From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weeping, lonely, in the North!"
Spake the mournful Mexic woman, as she laid him with her dead,
And turned to soothe the living, and bind the wounds which bled.

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Like a cloud before the wind
Rolls the battle down the mountains, leaving blood and death behind;
Ah! they plead in vain for mercy; in the dust the wounded strive;
Hide your faces, holy angels! oh thou Christ of God, forgive!"

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let the cool, gray shadows fall;
Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy curtain over all!
Through the thickening winter twilight, wide apart the battle rolled,

In its sheath the sabre rested, and the cannon's lips
grew cold.

But the noble Mexic women still their holy task pursued,
Through that long, dark night of sorrow, worn and faint and lacking food;
Over weak and suffering brothers, with a tender care they hung,
And the dying foeman blessed them in a strange and Northern tongue.

Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil world of ours;
Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring afresh the Eden flowers;
From its smoking hell of battle, Love and Pity send their prayer,
And still thy white-winged angels hover dimly in our air!

BARCLAY OF URY.°

Up the streets of Aberdeen,°
By the kirk and college green,
Rode the Laird of Ury;
Close behind him, close beside,
Foul of mouth and evil-eyed,
Pressed the mob in fury.

Flouted him the drunken churl,
Jeered at him the serving-girl,
Prompt to please her master;

And the begging carlin, late
Fed and clothed at Ury's gate,
Cursed him as he passed her.

Yet, with calm and stately mien,
Up the streets of Aberdeen
Came he slowly riding;
And, to all he saw and heard,
Answering not with bitter word,
Turning not for chiding.

Came a troop with broadswords swinging,
Bits and bridles sharply ringing,
Loose and free and froward;
Quoth the foremost, "Ride him down!
Push him! prick him! through the town
Drive the Quaker coward!"

But from out the thickening crowd
Cried a sudden voice and loud:
"Barclay! Ho! a Barclay!"
And the old man at his side
Saw a comrade, battle-tried,
Scarred and sun-burned darkly;

Who with ready weapon bare,
Fronting to the troopers there,
Cried aloud: "God save us,
Call ye coward him who stood
Ankle deep in Lutzen's blood,
With the brave Gustavus?"

"Nay, I do not need thy sword,
Comrade mine," said Ury's lord;

"Put it up, I pray thee:
Passive to his holy will,
Trust I in my Master still,
Even though he slay me.

"Pledges of thy love and faith,
Proved on many a field of death,
Not by me are needed."
Marvelled much that henchman bold,
That his laird, so stout of old,
Now so meekly pleaded.

"Woe's the day!" he sadly said,
With a slowly-shaking head,
And a look of pity;
"Ury's honest lord reviled,
Mock of knave and sport of child,
In his own good city!

"Speak the word, and, master mine,
As we charged on Tilly's° line,
And his Walloon lancers,
Smiting through their midst we'll teach
Civil look and decent speech
To these boyish prancers!"

"Marvel not, mine ancient friend,
Like beginning, like the end:"
Quoth the Laird of Ury,
"Is the sinful servant more
Than his gracious Lord who bore
Bonds and stripes in Jewry?

"Give me joy that in his name
I can bear, with patient frame,

All these vain ones offer;
While for them He suffereth long,
Shall I answer wrong with wrong,
Scoffing with the scoffer?

"Happier I, with loss of all,
Hunted, outlawed, held in thrall,
With few friends to greet me,
Than when reeve and squire were seen,
Riding out from Aberdeen,
With bared heads to meet me.

"When each goodwife, o'er and o'er,
Blessed me as I passed her door;
And the snooded daughter,°
Through her casement glancing down,
Smiled on him who bore renown
From red fields of slaughter.

"Hard to feel the stranger's scoff,
Hard the old friend's falling off,
Hard to learn forgiving:
But the Lord his own rewards,
And his love with theirs accords,
Warm and fresh and living.

"Through this dark and stormy night
Faith beholds a feeble light
Up the blackness streaking;
Knowing God's own time is best,
In a patient hope I rest
For the full day-breaking!"

So the Laird of Ury said,
Turning slow his horse's head

Towards the Tolbooth° prison,
Where, through iron gates, he heard
Poor disciples of the Word
Preach of Christ arisen!

Not in vain, Confessor old,
Unto us the tale is told
Of thy day of trial;
Every age on him, who strays
From its broad and beaten ways,
Pours its sevenfold vial.

Happy he whose inward ear
Angel comfortings can hear,
O'er the rabble's laughter;
And, while Hatred's fagots burn,
Glimpses through the smoke discern
Of the good hereafter.

Knowing this, that never yet
Share of Truth was vainly set
In the world's wide fallow;
After hands shall sow the seed,
After hands from hill and mead
Reap the harvests yellow.

Thus, with somewhat of the Seer,
Must the moral pioneer
From the Future borrow:
Clothe the waste with dreams of grain,
And, on midnight's sky of rain,
Paint the golden morrow!

THE LEGEND OF ST. MARK°

The day is closing dark and cold,
With roaring blast and sleety showers;
And through the dusk the lilacs wear
The bloom of snow, instead of flowers.

I turn me from the gloom without,
To ponder o'er a tale of old,
A legend of the age of Faith,
By dreaming monk or abbess told.

On Tintoretto's° canvas lives
That fancy of a loving heart,
In graceful lines and shapes of power,
And hues immortal as his art.

In Provence° (so the story runs)
There lived a lord, to whom, as slave,
A peasant boy of tender years
The chance of trade or conquest gave.

Forth-looking from the castle tower,
Beyond the hills with almonds dark,
The straining eye could scarce discern
The chapel of the good St. Mark.

And there, when bitter word or fare
The service of the youth repaid,
By stealth, before that holy shrine,
For grace to bear his wrong, he prayed.

The steed stamped at the castle gate,
The boar-hunt sounded on the hill;

Why stayed the Baron from the chase,
With looks so stern, and words so ill?

"Go, bind yon slave! and let him learn,
By scath of fire and strain of cord,
How ill they speed who give dead saints
The homage due their living lord!"

They bound him on the fearful rack,
When, through the dungeon's vaulted dark,
He saw the light of shining robes,
And knew the face of good St. Mark.

Then sank the iron rack apart,
The cords released their cruel clasp,
The pincers, with their teeth of fire,
Fell broken from the torturer's grasp.

And lo! before the Youth and Saint,
Barred door and wall of stone gave way;
And up from bondage and the night
They passed to freedom and the day!

O dreaming monk! thy tale is true; —
O painter! true thy pencil's art;
In tones of hope and prophecy,
Ye whisper to my listening heart!

Unheard no burdened heart's appeal
Moans up to God's inclining ear;
Unheeded by His tender eye,
Falls to the earth no sufferer's tear.

For still the Lord alone is God!
The pomp and power of tyrant man

Are scattered at His lightest breath,
Like chaff before the winnower's fan.

Not always shall the slave uplift
His heavy hands to Heaven in vain,
God's angel, like the good St. Mark,
Comes shining down to break his chain!

O weary ones! ye may not see
Your helpers in their downward flight;
Nor hear the sound of silver wings
Slow beating through the hush of night!

But not the less gray Dothan° shone,
With sunbright watchers bending low,
That Fear's dim eye beheld alone
The spear-heads of the Syrian foe.

There are, who, like the Seer of old,
Can see the helpers God has sent,
And how life's rugged mountain-side
Is white with many an angel tent!

They hear the heralds whom our Lord
Sends down His pathway to prepare;
And light, from others hidden, shines
On their high place of faith and prayer.

Let such, for earth's despairing ones,
Hopeless, yet longing to be free,
Breathe once again the Prophet's prayer:
"Lord, ope their eyes, that they may see!"

KATHLEEN°

O Norah, lay your basket down,
And rest your weary hand,
And come and hear me sing a song
Of our old Ireland.

There was a lord of Galaway,°
A mighty lord was he;
And he did wed a second wife,
A maid of low degree.

But he was old, and she was young,
And so, in evil spite,
She baked the black bread for his kin,
And fed her own with white.

She whipped the maids and starved the kern,°
And drove away the poor;
"Ah, woe is me!" the old lord said,
"I rue my bargain sore!"

This lord he had a daughter fair,
Beloved of old and young,
And nightly round the shealing-fires°
Of her the gleeman sung.

"As sweet and good is young Kathleen
As Eve before her fall;"
So sang the harper at the fair,
So harped he in the hall.

"Oh come to me, my daughter dear!
Come sit upon my knee,

For looking in your face, Kathleen,
Your mother's own I see!"

He smoothed and smoothed her hair away,
He kissed her forehead fair;
"It is my darling Mary's brow,
It is my darling's hair!"

Oh, then spake up the angry dame,
"Get up, get up," quoth she;
"I'll sell ye over Ireland,
I'll sell ye o'er the sea!"

She clipped her glossy hair away,
That none her rank might know,
She took away her gown of silk,
And gave her one of tow,

And sent her down to Limerick° town,
And to a seaman sold
This daughter of an Irish lord
For ten good pounds in gold.

The lord he smote upon his breast,
And tore his beard so gray;
But he was old, and she was young,
And so she had her way.

Sure that same night the Banshee° howled
To fright the evil dame,
And fairy folks, who loved Kathleen,
With funeral torches came.

She watched them glancing through the trees,
And glimmering down the hill;

They crept before the dead-vault door,
And there they all stood still!

"Get up, old man! the wake-lights shine!"
"Ye murthering witch," quoth he,
"So I'm rid of your tongue, I little care
If they shine for you or me."

"Oh, whoso brings my daughter back,
My gold and land shall have!"
Oh, then spake up his handsome page,
"No gold nor land I crave!

"But give to me your daughter dear,
Give sweet Kathleen to me;
Be she on sea or be she on land,
I'll bring her back to thee."

"My daughter is a lady born,
And you of low degree,
But she shall be your bride the day
You bring her back to me."

He sailed east, he sailed west,
And far and long sailed he,
Until he came to Boston town,
Across the great salt sea.

"Oh, have ye seen the young Kathleen,
The flower of Ireland?
Ye'll know her by her eyes so blue,
And by her snow-white hand!"

Out spake an ancient man, "I know
The maiden whom ye mean;

I bought her of a Limerick man,
And she is called Kathleen.

"No skill hath she in household work,
Her hands are soft and white,
Yet well by loving looks and ways
She doth her cost requite."

So up they walked through Boston town,
And met a maiden fair,
A little basket on her arm
So snowy-white and bare.

"Come hither, child, and say hast thou
This young man ever seen?"
They wept within each other's arms,
The page and young Kathleen.

"Oh give to me this darling child,
And take my purse of gold."
"Nay, not by me," her master said,
"Shall sweet Kathleen be sold.

"We loved her in the place of one
The Lord hath early ta'en;
But, since her heart's in Ireland,
We give her back again!"

Oh, for that same the saints in heaven
For his poor soul shall pray,
And Mary Mother wash with tears
His heresies away.

Sure now they dwell in Ireland,
As you go up Claremore

Ye'll see their castle looking down
The pleasant Galway shore.

And the old lord's wife is dead and gone,
And a happy man is he,
For he sits beside his own Kathleen,
With her darling on his knee.

TAULER°

Tauler, the preacher, walked, one autumn day,
Without the walls of Strasburg, by the Rhine,
Pondering the solemn Miracle of Life;
As one who, wandering in a starless night,
Feels, momently, the jar of unseen waves,
And hears the thunder of an unknown sea,
Breaking along an unimagined shore.

And as he walked he prayed. Even the same
Old prayer with which, for half a score of years,
Morning, and noon, and evening, lip and heart
Had groaned: "Have pity upon me, Lord!
Thou seest, while teaching others, I am blind.
Send me a man who can direct my steps!"

Then, as he mused, he heard along his path
A sound as of an old man's staff among
The dry, dead linden-leaves; and, looking up,
He saw a stranger, weak, and poor, and old.

"Peace be unto thee, father!" Tauler said,
"God give thee a good day!" The old man raised
Slowly his calm blue eyes. "I thank thee, son;
But *all* my days are good, and none are ill."

Wondering thereat, the preacher spake again,
"God give thee happy life." The old man smiled,
"I never am unhappy."

Tauler laid
His hand upon the stranger's coarse gray sleeve:
"Tell me, O father, what thy strange words mean.
Surely man's days are evil, and his life
Sad as the grave it leads to." "Nay, my son,
Our times are in God's hands, and all our days
Are as our needs: for shadow as for sun,
For cold as heat, for want as wealth, alike
Our thanks are due, since that is best which is;
And that which is not, sharing not his life,
Is evil only as devoid of good.
And for the happiness of which I spake,
I find it in submission to his will,
And calm trust in the holy Trinity
Of Knowledge, Goodness, and Almighty Power."

Silently wondering, for a little space,
Stood the great preacher; then he spake as one
Who, suddenly grappling with a haunting thought
Which long has followed, whispering through the dark
Strange terrors, drags it, shrieking, into light:
"What if God's will consign thee hence to Hell?"

"Then," said the stranger, cheerily, "be it so.
What Hell may be I know not; this I know, —
I cannot lose the presence of the Lord:
One arm, Humility, takes hold upon
His dear Humanity; the other, Love,
Clasps his Divinity. So where I go

He goes; and better fire-walled Hell with Him
Than golden-gated Paradise without."

Tears sprang in Tauler's eyes. A sudden light,
Like the first ray which fell on chaos, clove
Apart the shadow wherein he had walked
Darkly at noon. And, as the strange old man
Went his slow way, until his silver hair
Set like the white moon where the hills of vine
Slope to the Rhine, he bowed his head and said:
"My prayer is answered. God hath sent the man
Long sought, to teach me, by his simple trust,
Wisdom the weary schoolmen° never knew."

So, entering with a changed and cheerful step
The city gates, he saw, far down the street,
A mighty shadow break the light of noon,
While tracing backward till its airy lines
Hardened to stony plinths, he raised his eyes
O'er broad façade and lofty pediment,
O'er architrave and frieze and sainted niche,
Up the stone lace-work chiselled by the wise
Erwin of Steinbach,° dizzily up to where
In the noon-brightness the great Minster's tower,
Jewelled with sunbeams on its mural crown,
Rose like a visible prayer. "Behold!" he said,
"The stranger's faith made plain before mine eyes.
As yonder tower outstretches to the earth
The dark triangle of its shade alone
When the clear day is shining on its top,
So, darkness in the pathway of Man's life
Is but the shadow of God's providence,
By the great Sun of Wisdom cast thereon;
And what is dark below is light in Heaven."

MAUD MULLER

Maud Muller, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadow sweet with hay.

Beneath her torn hat glowed the wealth
Of simple beauty and rustic health.

Singing, she wrought, and her merry glee
The mock-bird echoed from his tree.

But when she glanced to the far-off town,
White from its hill-slope looking down,

The sweet song died, and a vague unrest
And a nameless longing filled her breast, —

A wish, that she hardly dared to own,
For something better than she had known.

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chestnut mane.

He drew his bridle in the shade
Of the apple-trees, to greet the maid,

And asked a draught from the spring that flowed
Through the meadow across the road.

She stooped where the cool spring bubbled up,
And filled for him her small tin cup,

And blushed as she gave it, looking down
On her feet so bare, and her tattered gown.

"Thanks!" said the Judge; "a sweeter draught
From a fairer hand was never quaffed."

He spoke of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees;

Then talked of the haying, and wondered whether
The cloud in the west would bring foul weather.

And Maud forgot her brier-torn gown,
And her graceful ankles bare and brown;

And listened, while a pleased surprise
Looked from her long-lashed hazel eyes.

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away.

Maud Muller looked and sighed: "Ah me!
That I the Judge's bride might be!

"He would dress me up in silks so fine,
And praise and toast me at his wine.

"My father should wear a broadcloth coat;
My brother should sail a painted boat.

"I'd dress my mother so grand and gay,
And the baby should have a new toy each day.

"And I'd feed the hungry and clothe the poor,
And all should bless me who left our door."

The Judge looked back as he climbed the hill,
And saw Maud Muller standing still.

"A form more fair, a face more sweet,
Ne'er hath it been my lot to meet.

"And her modest answer and graceful air
Show her wise and good as she is fair.

"Would she were mine, and I to-day,
Like her, a harvester of hay:

"No doubtful balance of rights and wrongs,
Nor weary lawyers with endless tongues,

"But low of cattle and song of birds,
And health and quiet and loving words."

But he thought of his sisters proud and cold,
And his mother vain of her rank and gold.

So, closing his heart the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon,
When he hummed in Court an old love tune;

And the young girl mused beside the well
Till the rain on the unraked clover fell.

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
Who lived for fashion, as he for power.

Yet oft, in his marble hearth's bright glow,
He watched a picture come and go;

And sweet Maud Muller's hazel eyes
Looked out in their innocent surprise.

Oft, when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead;

And closed his eyes on his garnished rooms
To dream of meadows and clover-blooms.

And the proud man sighed, with a secret pain,
"Ah, that I were free again!

"Free as when I rode that day,
Where the barefoot maiden raked her hay."

She wedded a man unlearned and poor,
And many children played round her door.

But care and sorrow, and childbirth pain,
Left their traces on heart and brain.

And oft, when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay in the meadow lot,

And she heard the little spring brook fall
Over the roadside, through the wall,

In the shade of the apple-tree again
She saw a rider draw his rein.

And, gazing down with timid grace,
She felt his pleased eyes read her face.

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls;

The weary wheel to a spinnet turned,
The tallow candle an astral burned,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw.
And joy was duty and love was law.

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, "It might have been."

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge!

God pity them both! and pity us all,
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall.

For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes;

And, in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away!

THE RANGER°

Robert Rawlin! — Frosts were falling
When the ranger's horn was calling
Through the woods to Canada.
Gone the winter's sleet and snowing,
Gone the spring-time's bud and blowing,
Gone the summer's harvest mowing,

And again the fields are gray.
Yet away, he's away!
Faint and fainter hope is growing
In the hearts that mourn his stay.

Where the lion, crouching high on
Abraham's rock° with teeth of iron,
Glares o'er wood and wave away,
Faintly thence, as pines far sighing,
Or as thunder spent and dying,
Come the challenge and replying,
Come the sounds of flight and fray,
Well-a-day! Hope and pray!
Some are living, some are lying
In their red graves far away.

Straggling rangers, worn with dangers,
Homeward faring, weary strangers
Pass the farm-gate on their way;
Tidings of the dead and living,
Forest march and ambush, giving,
Till the maidens leave their weaving,
And the lads forget their play.
"Still away, still away!"
Sighs a sad one, sick with grieving,
"Why does Robert still delay!"

Nowhere fairer, sweeter, rarer,
Does the golden-locked fruit-bearer
Through his painted woodlands stray,
Than where hillside oaks and beeches
Overlook the long, blue reaches,
Silver coves and pebbled beaches,

And green isles of Casco Bay°;
Nowhere day, for delay,
With a tenderer look beseeches,
"Let me with my charmed earth stay."

On the grain-lands of the mainlands
Stands the serried corn like trainbands,
Plume and pennon rustling gay;
Out at sea, the islands wooded,
Silver birches, golden-hooded,
Set with maples, crimson-blooded,
White sea-foam and sand-hills gray,
Stretch away, far away.
Dim and dreamy, over-brooded
By the hazy autumn day.

Gayly chattering to the clattering
Of the brown nuts downward pattering
Leap the squirrels, red and gray.
On the grass-land, on the fallow,
Drop the apples, red and yellow;
Drop the russet pears and mellow,
Drop the red leaves all the day.
And away, swift away,
Sun and cloud, o'er hill and hollow
Chasing, weave their web of play.

"Martha Mason, Martha Mason,
Prithee tell us of the reason
Why you mope at home to-day:
Surely smiling is not sinning;
Leave your quilling, leave your spinning;
What is all your store of linen,

If your heart is never gay?
Come away, come away!
Never yet did sad beginning
Make the task of life a play."

Overbending, till she's blending
With the flaxen skein she's tending
Pale brown tresses smoothed away
From her face of patient sorrow,
Sits she, seeking but to borrow,
From the trembling hope of morrow,
Solace for the weary day.
"Go your way, laugh and play;
Unto Him who heeds the sparrow
And the lily, let me pray."

"With our rally, rings the valley, —
Join us!" cried the blue-eyed Nelly;
"Join us!" cried the laughing May,
"To the beach we all are going,
And, to save the task of rowing,
West by north the wind is blowing,
Blowing briskly down the bay!
Come away, come away!
Time and tide are swiftly flowing,
Let us take them while we may!

"Never tell us that you'll fail us,
Where the purple beach-plum mellows
On the bluffs so wild and gray.
Hasten, for the oars are falling;
Hark, our merry mates are calling;
Time it is that we were all in,

Singing tideward down the bay!"
"Nay, nay, let me stay;
Sore and sad for Robert Rawlin
Is my heart," she said, "to-day."

"Vain your calling for Rob Rawlin!
Some red squaw his moose-meat's broiling
Or some French lass, singing gay;
Just forget as he's forgetting;
What avails a life of fretting?
If some stars must needs be setting,
Others rise as good as they."
"Cease, I pray; go your way!"
Martha cries, her eyelids wetting;
"Foul and false the words you say!"

"Martha Mason, hear to reason!
Prithee, put a kinder face on!"
"Cease to vex me," did she say;
"Better at his side be lying,
With the mournful pine-trees sighing,
And the wild birds o'er us crying,
Than to doubt like mine a prey;
While away, far away,
Turns my heart, for ever trying
Some new hope for each new day.

"When the shadows veil the meadows,
And the sunset's golden ladders
Sink from twilight's walls of gray, —
From the window of my dreaming,
I can see his sickle gleaming,
Cheery-voiced, can hear him teaming

Down the locust-shaded way;
But away, swift away,
Fades the fond, delusive seeming,
And I kneel again to pray.

"When the growing dawn is showing,
And the barn-yard cock is crowing,
And the horned moon pales away:
From a dream of him awaking,
Every sound my heart is making
Seems a footstep of his taking;
Then I hush the thought, and say,
'Nay, nay, he's away!'
Ah! my heart, my heart is breaking
For the dear one far away."

Look up, Martha! worn and swarthy,
Glows a face of manhood worthy:
"Robert!" "Martha!" all they say.
O'er went wheel and reel together,
Little cared the owner whither;
Heart of lead is heart of feather,
Noon of night is noon of day!
Come away, come away!
When such lovers meet each other,
Why should prying idlers stay?

Quench the timber's fallen embers,
Quench the red leaves in December's
Hoary rime and chilly spray.
But the hearth shall kindle clearer,
Household welcomes sound sincerer,
Heart to loving heart grow nearer,

When the bridal bells shall say:
"Hope and pray, trust alway;
Life is sweeter, love is dearer,
For the trial and delay!"

PROEM TO HOME BALLADS

I CALL the old time back: I bring these lays
To thee, in memory of the summer days
When, by our native streams and forest ways,
We dreamed them over; while the rivulets made
Songs of their own, and the great pine-trees laid
On warm noon-lights the masses of their shade.

And *she* was with us, living o'er again
Her life in ours, despite of years and pain, —
The autumn's brightness after latter rain.
Beautiful in her holy peace as one
Who stands, at evening, when the work is done,
Glorified in the setting of the sun!

Her memory makes our common landscape seem
Fairer than any of which painters dream,
Lights the brown hills and sings in every stream;
For she whose speech was always truth's pure gold
Heard, not unpleased, its simple legends told,
And loved with us the beautiful and old.

THE WITCH'S DAUGHTER°

IT was the pleasant harvest time,
When cellar-bins are closely stowed,
And garrets bend beneath their load,

And the old swallow-haunted barns —
Brown-gabled, long, and full of seams
Through which the moted sunlight streams,

And winds blow freshly in, to shake
The red plumes of the roosted cocks,
And the loose hay-mow's scented locks —

Are filled with summer's ripened stores,
Its odorous grass and barley sheaves,
From their low scaffolds to their eaves.

On Esek Harden's oaken floor,
With many an autumn threshing worn,
Lay the heaped ears of unhusked corn.

And thither came young men and maids,
Beneath a moon that, large and low
Lit that sweet eve of long ago.

They took their places; some by chance,
And others by a merry voice
Or sweet smile guided to their choice.

How pleasantly the rising moon,
Between the shadow of the mows,
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs! —

On sturdy boyhood sun-embrowned,
On girlhood with its solid curves
Of healthful strength and painless nerves!

And jest went round, and laughs that made
The house-dog answer with his howl,
And kept astir the barn-yard fowl;

And quaint old songs their fathers sung,
In Derby dales and Yorkshire° moors,
Ere Norman William ° trod their shores;

And tales, whose merry license shook
The fat sides of the Saxon thane,°
Forgetful of the hovering Dane°!

But still the sweetest voice was mute
That river valley ever heard
From lip of maid or throat of bird;

For Mabel Martin sat apart,
And let the hay-mow's shadow fall
Upon the loveliest face of all.

She sat apart, as one forbid,
Who knew that none would condescend
To own the Witch-wife's child a friend.

The seasons scarce had gone their round,
Since curious thousands thronged to see
Her mother on the gallows-tree;

And mocked the palsied limbs of age,
That faltered on the fatal stairs,
And wan lip trembling with its prayers!

Few questioned of the sorrowing child,
Or, when they saw the mother die,
Dreamed of the daughter's agony.

They went up to their homes that day,
As men and Christians justified:
God willed it, and the wretch had died!

Dear God and Father of us all,
Forgive our faith in cruel lies, —
Forgive the blindness that denies!

Forgive Thy creature when he takes
For the all-perfect love Thou art,
Some grim creation of his heart.

Cast down our idols, overturn
Our bloody altars; let us see
Thyself in Thy humanity!

Poor Mabel from her mother's grave
Crept to her desolate hearth-stone,
And wrestled with her fate alone;

With love, and anger, and despair,
The phantoms of disordered sense,
The awful doubts of Providence!

The schoolboys jeered her as they passed,
And, when she sought the house of prayer,
Her mother's curse pursued her there.

And still o'er many a neighboring door
She saw the horseshoe's curvèd charm,
To guard against her mother's harm; —

That mother, poor, and sick, and lame,
Who daily, by the old armchair,
Folded her withered hands in prayer; —

Who turned, in Salem's dreary jail,°
Her worn old Bible o'er and o'er,
When her dim eyes could read no more!

Sore tried and pained, the poor girl kept
Her faith, and trusted that her way,
So dark, would somewhere meet the day.

And still her weary wheel went round
Day after day, with no relief;
Small leisure have the poor for grief.

So in the shadow Mabel sits;
Untouched by mirth she sees and hears,
Her smile is sadder than her tears.

But cruel eyes have found her out,
And cruel lips repeat her name,
And taunt her with her mother's shame.

She answered not with railing words,
But drew her apron o'er her face,
And, sobbing, glided from the place.

And only pausing at the door,
Her sad eyes met the troubled gaze
Of one who, in her better days,

Had been her warm and steady friend,
Ere yet her mother's doom had made
Even Esek Harden half afraid.

He felt that mute appeal of tears,
And, starting, with an angry frown
Hushed all the wicked murmurs down.

"Good neighbors mine," he sternly said,
"This passes harmless mirth or jest;
I brook no insult to my guest.

"She is indeed her mother's child;
But God's sweet pity ministers
Unto no whiter soul than hers.

"Let Goody Martin rest in peace;
I never knew her harm a fly,
And witch or not, God knows, — not I.

"I know who swore her life away;
And, as God lives, I'd not condemn
An Indian dog on word of them."

The broadest lands in all the town,
The skill to guide, the power to awe,
Were Harden's; and his word was law.

None dared withstand him to his face,
But one sly maiden spake aside:
"The little witch is evil-eyed!

"Her mother only killed a cow,
Or witched a churn or dairy-pan;
But she, forsooth, must charm a man!"

Poor Mabel, in her lonely home,
Sat by the window's narrow pane,
White in the moonlight's silver rain.

The river, on its pebbled rim,
Made music such as childhood knew;
The door-yard tree was whispered through

By voices such as childhood's ear
Had heard in moonlights long ago;
And through the willow-boughs below

She saw the rippled waters shine;
Beyond, in waves of shade and light
The hills rolled off into the night.

Sweet sounds and pictures mocking so
The sadness of her human lot,
She saw and heard, but heeded not.

She strove to drown her sense of wrong,
And, in her old and simple way,
To teach her bitter heart to pray.

Poor child! the prayer, begun in faith,
Grew to a low, despairing cry
Of utter misery: "Let me die!

"Oh! take me from the scornful eyes,
And hide me where the cruel speech
And mocking finger may not reach!

"I dare not breathe my mother's name
A daughter's right I dare not crave
To weep above her unblest grave!

"Let me not live until my heart,
With few to pity, and with none
To love me, hardens into stone.

"O God! have mercy on Thy child,
Whose faith in Thee grows weak and small,
And take me ere I lose it all!"

A shadow on the moonlight fell,
And murmuring wind and wave became
A voice whose burden was her name.

Had then God heard her? Had He sent
His angel down? In flesh and blood,
Before her Esek Harden stood!

He laid his hand upon her arm:
"Dear Mabel, this no more shall be;
Who scoffs at you, must scoff at me.

"You know rough Esek Harden well;
And if he seems no suitor gay,
And if his hair is touched with gray,

"The maiden grown shall never find
His heart less warm than when she smiled,
Upon his knees, a little child!"

Her tears of grief were tears of joy,
As, folded in his strong embrace,
She looked in Esek Harden's face.

"O truest friend of all!" she said,
"God bless you for your kindly thought,
And make me worthy of my lot!"

He led her through his dewy fields,
To where the swinging lanterns glowed,
And through the doors the huskers showed.

"Good friends and neighbors!" Esek said,
"I'm weary of this lonely life;
In Mabel see my chosen wife!

"She greets you kindly, one and all;
The past is past, and all offence
Falls harmless from her innocence.

"Henceforth she stands no more alone;
You know what Esek Harden is:—
He brooks no wrong to him or his."

Now let the merriest tales be told,
And let the sweetest songs be sung
That ever made the old heart young!

For now the lost has found a home;
And a lone hearth shall brighter burn,
As all the household joys return!

Oh, pleasantly the harvest moon,
Between the shadow of the mows,
Looked on them through the great elm-boughs!

On Mabel's curls of golden hair,
On Esek's shaggy strength it fell;
And the wind whispered, "It is well!"

THE GARRISON OF CAPE ANN°

From the hills of home forth looking, far beneath the tent-like span
Of the sky, I see the white gleam of the headland of Cape Ann.
Well I know its coves and beaches to the ebb-tide glimmering down,
And the white-walled hamlet children of its ancient fishing-town.

Long has passed the summer morning, and its memory waxes old,

When along yon breezy headlands with a pleasant friend I strolled.
Ah! the autumn sun is shining, and the ocean wind blows cool,
And the golden-rod and aster bloom around thy grave, Rantoul°!

With the memory of that morning by the summer sea I blend
A wild and wondrous story, by the younger Mather penned,
In that quaint *Magnalia Christi*,° with all strange and marvellous things,
Heaped up, huge and undigested, like the chaos Ovid° sings.

Dear to me these far, faint glimpses of the dual life of old,
Inward, grand with awe and reverence; outward, mean and coarse and cold;
Gleams of mystic beauty playing over dull and vulgar clay;
Golden-threaded fancies weaving in a web of hodden gray.

The great eventful Present hides the Past; but through the din
Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life behind steal in;
And the lore of home and fireside, and the legendary rhyme,
Make the task of duty lighter which the true man owes his time.

So, with something of the feeling which the Covenanter knew,
When with pious chisel wandering Scotland's moorland graveyards through,
From the graves of old traditions I part the blackberry-vines,
Wipe the moss from off the headstones, and retouch the faded lines.

* * * * * *

Where the sea-waves back and forward, hoarse with rolling pebbles, ran,
The garrison-house stood watching on the gray rocks of Cape Ann;
On its windy site uplifting gabled roof and palisade,
And rough walls of unhewn timber with the moonlight overlaid.

On his slow round walked the sentry, south and eastward looking forth
O'er a rude and broken coast-line, white with breakers stretching north, —
Wood and rock and gleaming sand-drift, jagged capes, with bush and tree,
Leaning inland from the smiting of the wild and gusty sea.

Before the deep-mouthed chimney, dimly lit by dying brands,
Twenty soldiers sat and waited, with their muskets in their hands;
On the rough-hewn oaken table the venison haunch was shared,

And the pewter tankard circled slowly round from beard to beard.

Long they sat and talked together, — talked of wizards Satan-sold;
Of all ghostly sights and noises, — signs and wonders manifold;
Of the spectre-ship of Salem, with the dead men in her shrouds,
Sailing sheer above the water in the loom of morning clouds;

Of the marvellous valley hidden in the depths of Gloucester woods,
Full of plants that love the summer, — blooms of warmer latitudes;
Where the Arctic birch is braided by the tropic's flowery vines,
And the white magnolia-blossoms star the twilight of the pines!

But their voices sank yet lower, sank to husky tones of fear,
As they spake of present tokens of the powers of evil near;
Of a spectral host, defying stroke of steel and aim of gun;
Never yet was ball to slay them in the mould of mortals run!

Thrice, with plumes and flowing scalp-locks, from the midnight wood they came, —
Thrice around the block-house marching, met, unharmed, its volleyed flame;

Then, with mocking laugh and gesture, sunk in earth or lost in air,
All the ghostly wonder vanished, and the moonlit sands lay bare.

Midnight came; from out the forest moved a dusky mass that soon
Grew to warriors, plumed and painted, grimly marching in the moon.
"Ghosts or witches," said the captain, "thus I foil the Evil One!"
And he rammed a silver button, from his doublet, down his gun.

Once again the spectral horror moved the guarded wall about;
Once again the levelled muskets through the palisades flashed out,
With that deadly aim the squirrel on his tree-top might not shun,
Nor the beach-bird seaward flying with his slant wing to the sun.

Like the idle rain of summer sped the harmless shower of lead,
With a laugh of fierce derision, once again the phantoms fled;
Once again, without a shadow on the sands the moonlight lay,
And the white smoke curling through it drifted slowly down the bay!

"God preserve us!" said the captain; "never mortal foes were there:

They have vanished with their leader, Prince and Power of the air!
Lay aside your useless weapons; skill and prowess naught avail;
They who do the devil's service wear their master's coat of mail!"

So the night grew near to cock-crow, when again a warning call
Roused the score of weary soldiers watching round the dusky hall:
And they looked to flint and priming, and they longed for break of day;
But the captain closed his Bible: "Let us cease from man, and pray!"

To the men who went before us, all the unseen powers seemed near,
And their steadfast strength of courage struck its roots in holy fear.
Every hand forsook the musket, every head was bowed and bare,
Every stout knee pressed the flagstones, as the captain led in prayer.

Ceased thereat the mystic marching of the spectres round the wall,
But a sound abhorred, unearthly, smote the ears and hearts of all, —
Howls of rage and shrieks of anguish! Never after mortal man
Saw the ghostly leaguers marching round the blockhouse of Cape Ann.

So to us who walk in summer through the cool and sea-blown town,
From the childhood of its people comes the solemn legend down.
Not in vain the ancient fiction, in whose moral lives the youth
And the fitness and the freshness of an undecaying truth.

Soon or late to all our dwellings come the spectres of the mind,
Doubts and fears and dread forebodings, in the darkness undefined;
Round us throng the grim projections of the heart and of the brain,
And our pride of strength is weakness, and the cunning hand is vain.

In the dark we cry like children; and no answer from on high
Breaks the crystal spheres of silence, and no white wings downward fly;
But the heavenly help we pray for comes to faith, and not to sight,
And our prayers themselves drive backward all the spirits of the night!

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE°

Of all the rides since the birth of time,
Told in story or sung in rhyme, —
On Apuleius's Golden Ass,°

Or one-eyed Calendar's horse of brass,°
Witch astride of a human back,
Islam's prophet on Al-Borák,° —
The strangest ride that ever was sped
Was Ireson's, out from Marblehead!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Body of turkey, head of owl,
Wings a-droop like a rained-on fowl,
Feathered and ruffled in every part,
Skipper Ireson stood in the cart.
Scores of women, old and young,
Strong of muscle, and glib of tongue,
Pushed and pulled up the rocky lane,
Shouting and singing the shrill refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Wrinkled scolds with hands on hips,
Girls in bloom of cheek and lips,
Wild-eyed, free-limbed, such as chase
Bacchus° round some antique vase,
Brief of skirt, with ankles bare,
Loose of kerchief and loose of hair,
With conch-shells blowing and fish-horns' twang,
Over and over the Mænads° sang:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Small pity for him! — He sailed away
From a leaking ship, in Chaleur Bay,° —
Sailed away from a sinking wreck,
With his own town's-people on her deck!
"Lay by! lay by!" they called to him.
Back he answered, "Sink or swim!
Brag of your catch of fish again!"
And off he sailed through the fog and rain!
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Fathoms deep in dark Chaleur
That wreck shall lie for evermore.
Mother and sister, wife and maid,
Looked from the rocks of Marblehead
Over the moaning and rainy sea, —
Looked for the coming that might not be!
What did the winds and the sea-birds say
Of the cruel captain who sailed away? —
Old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Through the street, on either side,
Up flew windows, doors swung wide;
Sharp-tongued spinsters, old wives gray,
Treble lent the fish-horn's bray.
Sea-worn grandsires, cripple-bound,
Hulks of old sailors run aground,
Shook head, and fist, and hat, and cane,
And cracked with curses the hoarse refrain:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,

Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

Sweetly along the Salem road
Bloom of orchard and lilac showed.
Little the wicked skipper knew
Of the fields so green and the sky so blue.
Riding there in his sorry trim,
Like an Indian idol glum and grim,
Scarcely he seemed the sound to hear
Of voices shouting, far and near:
"Here's Flud Oirson, fur his horrd horrt,
Torr'd an' futherr'd an' corr'd in a corrt
By the women o' Morble'ead!"

"Hear me, neighbors!" at last he cried, —
"What to me is this noisy ride?
What is the shame that clothes the skin
To the nameless horror that lives within!
Waking or sleeping, I see a wreck,
And hear a cry from a reeling deck!
Hate me and curse me, — I only dread
The hand of God and the face of the dead!"
Said old Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

Then the wife of the skipper lost at sea
Said, "God has touched him! — why should we?"
Said an old wife mourning her only son,
"Cut the rogue's tether and let him run!"
So with soft relentings and rude excuse,
Half scorn, half pity, they cut him loose,

And gave him a cloak to hide him in,
And left him alone with his shame and sin.
Poor Floyd Ireson, for his hard heart,
Tarred and feathered and carried in a cart
By the women of Marblehead!

TELLING THE BEES°

HERE is the place°; right over the hill
Runs the path I took:
You can see the gap in the old wall still,
And the stepping-stones in the shallow brook.

There is the house, with the gate red-barred,
And the poplars tall;
And the barn's brown length, and the cattle-yard,
And the white horns tossing above the wall.

There are the beehives ranged in the sun;
And down by the brink
Of the brook are her poor flowers, weed-o'errun,
Pansy and daffodil, rose and pink.

A year has gone, as the tortoise goes,
Heavy and slow;
And the same rose blows, and the same sun glows,
And the same brook sings of a year ago.

There's the same sweet clover-smell in the breeze;
And the June sun warm
Tangles his wings of fire in the trees,
Setting, as then, over Fernside farm.

I mind me how with a lover's care
From my Sunday coat
I brushed off the burs, and smoothed my hair,
And cooled at the brookside my brow and throat.

Since we parted, a month had passed,
To love, a year;
Down through the beeches I looked at last
On the little red gate and the well-sweep near.

I can see it all now, — the slantwise rain
Of light through the leaves,
The sundown's blaze on her window-pane.
The bloom of her roses under the eaves.

Just the same as a month before, —
The house and the trees,
The barn's brown gable, the vine by the door, —
Nothing changed but the hives of bees.

Before them, under the garden wall,
Forward and back,
Went drearily singing the chore-girl[1] small,
Draping each hive with a shred of black.

Trembling, I listened: the summer sun
Had the chill of snow;
For I knew she was telling the bees of one
Gone on the journey we all must go!

Then I said to myself, "My Mary weeps
For the dead to-day:

[1] The chore-girl is the one who does odd jobs — "chores" — about the house, the same as the English *charwoman*.

Haply her blind old grandsire sleeps
The fret and the pain of his age away."

But her dog whined low; on the doorway sill,
With his cane to his chin,
The old man sat; and the chore-girl still
Sung to the bees stealing out and in.

And the song she was singing ever since
In my ears sounds on: —
"Stay at home, pretty bees, fly not hence!
Mistress Mary is dead and gone!"

THE SYCAMORES

In the outskirts of the village,
On the river's winding shores,
Stand the Occidental plane-trees,
Stand the ancient sycamores.

One long century hath been numbered,
And another half-way told,
Since the rustic Irish gleeman
Broke from them the virgin mould.

Deftly set to Celtic° music,
At his violin's sound they grew,
Through the moonlit eves of summer,
Making Amphion's° fable true.

Rise again, thou poor Hugh Tallant!°
Pass in jerkin green along,

With thy eyes brimful of laughter,
And thy mouth as full of song.

Pioneer of Erin's outcasts,
With his fiddle and his pack;
Little dreamed the village Saxons
Of the myriads at his back.

How he wrought with spade and fiddle,
Delved by day and sang by night,
With a hand that never wearied,
And a heart forever light, —

Still the gay tradition mingles
With a record grave and drear,
Like the rolic air of Cluny,
With the solemn march of Mear.°

When the box-tree, white with blossoms,
Made the sweet May woodlands glad,
And the Aronia by the river
Lighted up the swarming shad.

And the bulging nets swept shoreward,
With their silver-sided haul,
Midst the shouts of dripping fishers,
He was merriest of them all.

When, among the jovial huskers,
Love stole in at Labor's side
With the lusty airs of England
Soft his Celtic measures vied.

Songs of love and wailing lyke-wake,
And the merry fair's carouse;

Of the wild Red Fox of Erin
And the Woman of Three Cows.

By the blazing hearths of winter,
Pleasant seemed his simple tales,
Midst the grimmer Yorkshire° legends
And the mountain myths of Wales.

How the souls in Purgatory
Scrambled up from fate forlorn,
On St. Keven's° sackcloth ladder,
Slyly hitched to Satan's horn.

Of the fiddler who at Tara°
Played all night to ghosts of kings;
Of the brown dwarfs, and the fairies
Dancing in their moorland rings!

Jolliest of our birds of singing,
Best he loved the Bob-o-link.
"Hush!" he'd say, "the tipsy fairies!
Hear the little folks in drink!"

Merry-faced, with spade and fiddle,
Singing through the ancient town,
Only this, of poor Hugh Tallant,
Hath Tradition handed down.

Not a stone his grave discloses;
But if yet his spirit walks,
'Tis beneath the trees he planted,
And when Bob-o-Lincoln talks;

Green memorials of the gleeman!
Linking still the river-shores,

With their shadows cast by sunset,
Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores!

When the Father of his Country
Through the north-land riding came,
And the roofs were starred with banners,
And the steeples rang acclaim, —

When each war-scarred Continental,
Leaving smithy, mill, and farm,
Waved his rustic sword in welcome,
And shot off his old king's arm, —

Slowly passed that august Presence
Down the thronged and shouting street;
Village girls as white as angels,
Scattering flowers around his feet.

Midway, where the plane-tree's shadow
Deepest fell, his rein he drew:
On his stately head, uncovered,
Cool and soft the west-wind blew.

And he stood up in his stirrups,
Looking up and looking down
On the hills of Gold and Silver
Rimming round the little town, —

On the river, full of sunshine,
To the lap of greenest vales
Winding down from wooded headlands,
Willow-skirted, white with sails.

And he said, the landscape sweeping
Slowly with his ungloved hand,

"I have seen no prospect fairer
In this goodly Eastern land."

Then the bugles of his escort
Stirred to life the cavalcade:
And that head, so bare and stately,
Vanished down the depths of shade.

Ever since, in town and farm-house,
Life has had its ebb and flow;
Thrice hath passed the human harvest
To its garner green and low.

But the trees the gleeman planted,
Through the changes, changeless stand;
As the marble calm of Tadmor
Marks° the desert's shifting sand.

Still the level moon at rising
Silvers o'er each stately shaft;
Still beneath them, half in shadow,
Singing, glides the pleasure craft.

Still beneath them, arm-enfolded,
Love and Youth together stray;
While, as heart to heart beats faster,
More and more their feet delay.

Where the ancient cobbler, Keezar,°
On the open hillside wrought,
Singing, as he drew his stitches,
Songs his German masters taught,

Singing, with his gray hair floating
Round his rosy ample face, —

Now a thousand Saxon craftsmen
Stitch and hammer in his place.

All the pastoral lanes so grassy
Now are Traffic's dusty streets;
From the village, grown a city,
Fast the rural grace retreats.

But, still green, and tall, and stately,
On the river's winding shores,
Stand the Occidental plane-trees,
Stand Hugh Tallant's sycamores.

THE DOUBLE-HEADED SNAKE° OF NEWBURY

"Concerning y^e^ Amphisbæna, as soon as I received your commands, I made diligent inquiry: . . . he assured me y^t^ it had really two heads, one at each end; two mouths, two stings or tongues."— Rev. CHRISTOPHER TOPPAN to COTTON MATHER.

FAR away in the twilight time
Of every people, in every clime,
Dragons and griffins and monsters dire,
Born of water, and air, and fire,
Or nursed, like the Python,° in the mud
And ooze of the old Deucalion° flood,
Crawl and wriggle and foam with rage,
Through dusk tradition and ballad age.
So from the childhood of Newbury° town
And its time of fable the tale comes down
Of a terror which haunted bush and brake,
The Amphisbæna, the Double Snake!

Thou who makest the tale thy mirth,
Consider that strip of Christian earth

On the desolate shore of a sailless sea,
Full of terror and mystery,
Half redeemed from the evil hold
Of the wood so dreary, and dark, and old,
Which drank with its lips of leaves the dew
When Time was young, and the world was new,
And wove its shadows with sun and moon,
Ere the stones of Cheops° were squared and hewn.
Think of the sea's dread monotone,
Of the mournful wail from the pine-wood blown,
Of the strange, vast splendors that lit the North,
Of the troubled throes of the quaking earth,
And the dismal tales the Indian told,
Till the settler's heart at his hearth grew cold,
And he shrank from the tawny wizard's boasts,
And the hovering shadows seemed full of ghosts,
And above, below, and on every side,
The fear of his creed seemed verified; —
And think, if his lot were now thine own,
To grope with terrors nor named nor known,
How laxer muscle and weaker nerve
And a feebler faith thy need might serve;
And own to thyself the wonder more
That the snake had two heads, and not a score!

Whether he lurked in the Oldtown fen
Or the gray earth-flax of the Devil's Den,
Or swam in the wooded Artichoke,
Or coiled by the Northman's Written Rock,°
Nothing on record is left to show;
Only the fact that he lived, we know,
And left the cast of a double head
In the scaly mask which he yearly shed.

For he carried a head where his tail should be,
And the two, of course, could never agree,
But wriggled about with main and might,
Now to the left and now to the right;
Pulling and twisting this way and that,
Neither knew what the other was at.

A snake with two heads, lurking so near! —
Judge of the wonder, guess at the fear!
Think what ancient gossips might say,
Shaking their heads in their dreary way,
Between the meetings on Sabbath-day!
How urchins, searching at day's decline
The Common Pasture° for sheep or kine,
The terrible double-ganger heard
In leafy rustle or whir of bird!
Think what a zest it gave to the sport,
In berry-time, of the younger sort,
As over pastures blackberry-twined,
Reuben and Dorothy lagged behind,
And closer and closer, for fear of harm,
The maiden clung to her lover's arm;
And how the spark, who was forced to stay,
By his sweetheart's fears, till the break of day,
Thanked the snake for the fond delay!

Far and wide the tale was told,
Like a snowball growing while it rolled.
The nurse hushed with it the baby's cry;
And it served, in the worthy minister's eye,
To paint the primitive serpent by.
Cotton Mather° came galloping down
All the way to Newbury town,

With his eyes agog and his ears set wide,
And his marvellous inkhorn at his side;
Stirring the while in the shallow pool
Of his brains for the lore he learned at school,
To garnish the story, with here a streak
Of Latin, and there another of Greek:
And the tales he heard and the notes he took,
Behold! are they not in his Wonder-Book?

Stories, like dragons, are hard to kill.
If the snake does not, the tale runs still
In Byfield Meadows, on Pipestave Hill.
And still, whenever husband and wife
Publish the shame of their daily strife,
And, with mad cross-purpose, tug and strain,
At either end of the marriage-chain,
The gossips say, with a knowing shake
Of their gray heads, "Look at the Double Snake!
One in body and two in will,
The Amphisbæna is living still!"

THE SWAN SONG OF PARSON AVERY

When the reaper's task was ended, and the summer wearing late,
Parson Avery sailed from Newbury, with his wife and children eight,
Dropping down the river-harbor in the shallop "Watch and Wait."

Pleasantly lay the clearings in the mellow summer-morn,

With the newly-planted orchards dropping their fruits first-born,
And the homesteads like green islands amid a sea of corn.

Broad meadows reached out seaward the tided creeks between,
And hills rolled wave-like inland, with oaks and walnuts green; —
A fairer home, a goodlier land, his eyes had never seen.

Yet away sailed Parson Avery, away where duty led,
And the voice of God seemed calling, to break the living bread
To the souls of fishers starving on the rocks of Marblehead.

All day they sailed: at nightfall the pleasant land-breeze died,
The blackening sky, at midnight, its starry lights denied,
And far and low the thunder of tempest prophesied!

Blotted out were all the coast-lines, gone were rock, and wood, and sand;
Grimly anxious stood the skipper with the rudder in his hand,
And questioned of the darkness what was sea and what was land.

And the preacher heard his dear ones, nestled round him, weeping sore:
"Never heed, my little children! Christ is walking on before

To the pleasant land of heaven, where the sea shall be
no more."

All at once the great cloud parted, like a curtain drawn
aside,
To let down the torch of lightning on the terror far
and wide;
And the thunder and the whirlwind together smote
the tide.

There was wailing in the shallop, woman's wail and
man's despair,
A crash of breaking timbers on the rocks so sharp and
bare,
And, through it all, the murmur of Father Avery's
prayer.

From his struggle in the darkness with the wild waves
and the blast,
On a rock, where every billow broke above him as it
passed,
Alone, of all his household, the man of God was cast.

There a comrade heard him praying, in the pause of
wave and wind:
"All my own have gone before me, and I linger just
behind;
Not for life I ask, but only for the rest Thy ransomed
find!

"In this night of death I challenge the promise of Thy
word! —
Let me see the great salvation of which mine ears have
heard! —

Let me pass from hence forgiven, through the grace of Christ, our Lord!

"In the baptism of these waters wash white my every sin,
And let me follow up to Thee my household and my kin!
Open the sea-gate of Thy heaven, and let me enter in!"

When the Christian sings his death-song, all the listening heavens draw near,
And the angels, leaning over the walls of crystal, hear
How the notes so faint and broken swell to music in God's ear.

The ear of God was open to His servant's last request;
As the strong waves swept him downward the sweet hymn upward pressed,
And the soul of Father Avery went, singing, to its rest.

There was wailing on the mainland, from the rocks of Marblehead;
In the stricken church of Newbury the notes of prayer were read;
And long, by board and hearthstone, the living mourned the dead.

And still the fishers outbound, or scudding from the squall,
With grave and reverend faces, the ancient tale recall,
When they see the white waves breaking on the Rock of Avery's Fall!

THE TRUCE OF PISCATAQUA °

1675

Raze these long blocks of brick and stone,
These huge mill-monsters overgrown;
Blot out the humbler piles as well,
Where, moved like living shuttles, dwell
The weaving genii of the bell;
Tear from the wild Cocheco's ° track
The dams that hold its torrents back;
And let the loud-rejoicing fall
Plunge, roaring, down its rocky wall;
And let the Indian's paddle play
On the unbridgèd Piscataqua °!
Wide over hill and valley spread
Once more the forest, dusk and dread,
With here and there a clearing cut
From the walled shadows round it shut;
Each with its farm-house builded rude,
By English yeoman squared and hewed,
And the grim, flankered block-house bound
With bristling palisades around.
So, haply shall before thine eyes
The dusty veil of centuries rise,
The old, strange scenery overlay
The tamer pictures of to-day,
While, like the actors in a play,
Pass in their ancient guise along
The figures of my border song:
What time beside Cocheco's flood
The white man and the red man stood,

With words of peace and brotherhood;
When passed the sacred calumet
From lip to lip with fire-draught wet,
And, puffed in scorn, the peace-pipe's smoke,
Through the gray beard of Waldron broke,
And Squando's voice, in suppliant plea
For mercy, struck the haughty key
Of one who held, in any fate,
His native pride inviolate!

"Let your ears be opened wide!
He who speaks has never lied.
Waldron of Piscataqua,
Hear what Squando has to say!

"Squando shuts his eyes and sees
Far off, Saco's° hemlock-trees.
In his wigwam, still as stone,
Sits a woman all alone,

"Wampum beads and birchen strands
Dropping from her careless hands,
Listening ever for the fleet
Patter of a dead child's feet!

"When the moon a year ago
Told the flowers the time to blow,
In that lonely wigwam smiled
Menewee, our little child.

"Ere that moon grew thin and old,
He was lying stiff and cold;
Sent before us, weak and small,
When the Master did not call!

"On his little grave I lay;
Three times went and came the day;
Thrice above me blazed the noon,
Thrice above me wept the moon.

"In the third night-watch I heard,
Far and low, a spirit-bird;
Very mournful, very wild,
Sang the totem of my child.°

"'Menewee, poor Menewee,
Walks a path he cannot see:
Let the white man's wigwam light
With its blaze his steps aright.

"'All uncalled, he dares not show
Empty hands to Manito°:
Better gifts he cannot bear
Than the scalps his slayers wear.'

"All the while the totem sang,
Lightning blazed and thunder rang;
And a black cloud, reaching high,
Pulled the white moon from the sky.

"I, the medicine-man, whose ear
All that spirits hear can hear, —
I, whose eyes are wide to see
All the things that are to be, —

"Well I knew the dreadful signs
In the whispers of the pines,
In the river roaring loud,
In the mutter of the cloud.

"At the breaking of the day,
From the grave I passed away;
Flowers bloomed round me, birds sang glad,
But my heart was hot and mad.

"There is rust on Squando's knife,
From the warm, red springs of life;
On the funeral hemlock-trees
Many a scalp the totem sees.

"Blood for blood! But evermore
Squando's heart is sad and sore;
And his poor squaw waits at home
For the feet that never come!

"Waldron of Cocheco, hear!
Squando speaks, who laughs at fear;
Take the captives he has ta'en;
Let the land have peace again!"

As the words died on his tongue,
Wide apart his warriors swung;
Parted, at the sign he gave,
Right and left, like Egypt's wave.°

And, like Israel passing free
Through the prophet-charmèd sea,
Captive mother, wife, and child
Through the dusky terror filed.

One alone, a little maid,
Middleway her steps delayed,
Glancing, with quick, troubled sight,
Round about from red to white.

Then his hand the Indian laid
On the little maiden's head,
Lightly from her forehead fair
Smoothing back her yellow hair.

"Gift or favor ask I none;
What I have is all my own:
Never yet the birds have sung,
'Squando hath a beggar's tongue.'

"Yet for her who waits at home
For the dead who cannot come,
Let the little Gold-hair be
In the place of Menewee!

"Mishanock, my little star!
Come to Saco's pines afar;
Where the sad one waits at home,
Wequashim, my moonlight, come!"

"What!" quoth Waldron, "leave a child
Christian-born to heathens wild?
As God lives, from Satan's hand
I will pluck her as a brand!"

"Hear me, white man!" Squando cried;
"Let the little one decide.
Wequashim, my moonlight, say,
Wilt thou go with me, or stay?"

Slowly, sadly, half afraid,
Half regretfully, the maid
Owned the ties of blood and race, —
Turned from Squando's pleading face.

Not a word the Indian spoke,
But his wampum° chain he broke,
And the beaded wonder hung
On that neck so fair and young.

Silence-shod, as phantoms seem
In the marches of a dream,
Single-filed, the grim array
Through the pine-trees wound away.

Doubting, trembling, sore amazed,
Through her tears the young child gazed.
"God preserve her!" Waldron said;
"Satan hath bewitched the maid!"

Years went and came. At close of day
Singing came a child from play,
Tossing from her loose-locked head
Gold in sunshine, brown in shade.

Pride was in the mother's look,
But her head she gravely shook,
And with lips that fondly smiled
Feigned to chide her truant child.

Unabashed, the maid began:
"Up and down the brook I ran,
Where, beneath the bank so steep,
Lie the spotted trout asleep.

"'Chip!' went squirrel on the wall,
After me I heard him call,
And the cat-bird on the tree
Tried his best to mimic me.

"Where the hemlocks grew so dark
That I stopped to look and hark,
On a log, with feather-hat,
By the path, an Indian sat.

"Then I cried, and ran away;
But he called, and bade me stay;
And his voice was good and mild
As my mother's to her child.

"And he took my wampum chain,
Looked and looked it o'er again;
Gave me berries, and, beside,
On my neck a plaything tied."

Straight the mother stooped to see
What the Indian's gift might be,
On the braid of wampum hung,
Lo! a cross of silver swung.

Well she knew its graven sign,
Squando's bird and totem pine;
And, a mirage of the brain,
Flowed her childhood back again.

Flashed the roof the sunshine through,
Into space the walls outgrew;
On the Indian's wigwam-mat,
Blossom-crowned, again she sat.

Cool she felt the west-wind blow,
In her ear the pines sang low,
And, like links from out a chain,
Dropped the years of care and pain.

From the outward toil and din,
From the griefs that gnaw within,
To the freedom of the woods
Called the birds, and winds, and floods.

Well, O painful minister°!
Watch thy flock, but blame not her,
If her ear grew sharp to hear
All their voices whispering near.

Blame her not, as to her soul
All the desert's glamour stole,
That a tear for childhood's loss
Dropped upon the Indian's cross.

When, that night, the Book was read,
And she bowed her widowed head,
And a prayer for each loved name
Rose like incense from a flame,

To the listening ear of Heaven,
Lo! another name was given:
"Father, give the Indian rest!
Bless him! for his love has blest!"

MY PLAYMATE°

The pines were dark on Ramoth hill,
  Their song was soft and low;
The blossoms in the sweet May wind
  Were falling like the snow.

The blossoms drifted at our feet,
  The orchard birds sang clear;

The sweetest and the saddest day
It seemed of all the year.

For, more to me than birds or flowers,
My playmate left her home,
And took with her the laughing spring,
The music and the bloom.

She kissed the lips of kith and kin,
She laid her hand in mine:
What more could ask the bashful boy
Who fed her father's kine?

She left us in the bloom of May:
The constant years told o'er
Their seasons with as sweet May morns,
But she came back no more.

I walk, with noiseless feet, the round
Of uneventful years;
Still o'er and o'er I sow the spring
And reap the autumn ears.

She lives where all the golden year
Her summer roses blow;
The dusky children of the sun
Before her come and go.

There haply with her jewelled hands
She smooths her silken gown, —
No more the homespun lap wherein
I shook the walnuts down.

The wild grapes wait us by the brook,
The brown nuts on the hill,

And still the May-day flowers make sweet
The woods of Follymill.

The lilies blossom in the pond,
The bird builds in the tree,
The dark pines sing on Ramoth hill
The slow song of the sea.

I wonder if she thinks of them,
And how the old time seems, —
If ever the pines of Ramoth wood
Are sounding in her dreams.

I see her face, I hear her voice:
Does she remember mine?
And what to her is now the boy
Who fed her father's kine?

What cares she that the orioles build
For other eyes than ours, —
That other hands with nuts are filled,
And other laps with flowers?

O playmate in the golden time!
Our mossy seat is green,
Its fringing violets blossom yet,
The old trees o'er it lean.

The winds so sweet with birch and fern
A sweeter memory blow;
And there in spring the veeries sing
The song of long ago.

And still the pines of Ramoth wood
Are moaning like the sea, —
The moaning of the sea of change
Between myself and thee!

THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS

Tritemius of Herbipolis, one day,
While kneeling at the altar's foot to pray,
Alone with God, as was his pious choice,
Heard from without a miserable voice,
A sound which seemed of all sad things to tell,
As of a lost soul crying out of hell.

Thereat the Abbot paused; the chain whereby
His thoughts went upward broken by that cry;
And, looking from the casement, saw below
A wretched woman, with gray hair a-flow,
And withered hands held up to him, who cried
For alms as one who might not be denied.

She cried, "For the dear love of Him who gave
His life for ours, my child from bondage save, —
My beautiful, brave first-born, chained with slaves
In the Moor's galley, where the sun-smit waves
Lap the white walls of Tunis°!" — "What I can
I give," Tritemius said: "my prayers." — "O man
Of God!" she cried, for grief had made her bold,
"Mock me not thus; I ask not prayers, but gold.
Words will not serve me, alms alone suffice;
Even while I speak perchance my first-born dies."

"Woman!" Tritemius answered, "from our door
None go unfed; hence are we always poor,

A single soldo is our only store.
Thou hast our prayers; — what can we give thee more?"

"Give me," she said, "the silver candlesticks
On either side of the great crucifix.
God well may spare them on His errands sped,
Or He can give you golden ones instead."

Then spake Tritemius, "Even as thy word,
Woman, so be it! (Our most gracious Lord,
Who loveth mercy more than sacrifice,
Pardon me if a human soul I prize
Above the gifts upon His altar piled!)
Take what thou askest, and redeem thy child."

But his hand trembled as the holy alms
He placed within the beggar's eager palms;
And as she vanished down the linden shade
He bowed his head and for forgiveness prayed.

So the day passed, and when the twilight came
He woke to find the chapel all aflame,
And, dumb with grateful wonder, to behold
Upon the altar candlesticks of gold!

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW°

Pipes of the misty moorlands,
Voice of the glens and hills;
The droning of the torrents,
The treble of the rills!

Not the braes of broom and heather,
Nor the mountains dark with rain,
Nor maiden bower, nor border tower,
Have heard your sweetest strain!

Dear to the Lowland reaper,°
And plaided mountaineer, —
To the cottage and the castle
The Scottish pipes° are dear; —
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch°
O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
The Pipes at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
Near and nearer circles swept.
"Pray for rescue, wives and mothers, —
Pray to-day!" the soldier said;
"To-morrow, death's between us
And the wrong and shame we dread."

O, they listened, looked, and waited,
Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground:
"Dinna ye hear it? — dinna ye hear it?
The pipes o' Havelock sound!"

Hushed the wounded man his groaning;
Hushed the wife her little ones;

Alone they heard the drum-roll
And the roar of Sepoy° guns.
But to sounds of home and childhood
The Highland ear was true; —
As her mother's cradle-crooning
The mountain pipes she knew.

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch,
She knew the Campbell's° call:
"Hark! hear ye no' MacGregor's,° —
The grandest o' them all!"

O, they listened, dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee°
Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's;
"God be praised! — the March of Havelock!
The piping of the clans!"

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords at strife,
Came the wild MacGregor's clan-call,
Stinging all the air to life.
But when the far-off dust-cloud
To plaided legions grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
  Moslem mosque and Pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
  The air of Auld Lang Syne.
O'er the cruel roll of war-drums
  Rose that sweet and homelike strain;
And the tartan clove the turban,
  As the Goomtee cleaves the plain.

Dear to the corn-land reaper
  And plaided mountaineer, —
To the cottage and the castle
  The piper's song is dear.
Sweet sounds the Gaelic° pibroch
  O'er mountain, glen, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
  The Pipes at Lucknow played!

THE RED RIVER VOYAGEUR

Out and in the river is winding
  The links of its long, red chain
Through belts of dusky pine-land
  And gusty leagues of plain.

Only, at times, a smoke-wreath
  With the drifting cloud-rack joins, —
The smoke of the hunting-lodges
  Of the wild Assiniboins°!

Drearily blows the north-wind
  From the land of ice and snow;

The eyes that look are weary,
And heavy the hands that row.

And with one foot on the water,
And one upon the shore,
The Angel of Shadow gives warning
That day shall be no more.

Is it the clang of wild-geese?
Is it the Indian's yell,
That lends to the voice of the north-wind
The tones of a far-off bell?

The voyageur smiles as he listens
To the sound that grows apace;
Well he knows the vesper ringing
Of the bells of St. Boniface.°

The bells of the Roman Mission,
That call from their turrets twain,
To the boatman on the river,
To the hunter on the plain!

Even so in our mortal journey
The bitter north winds blow,
And thus upon life's Red River
Our hearts, as oarsmen, row.

And when the Angel of Shadow
Rests his feet on wave and shore,
And our eyes grow dim with watching,
And our hearts faint at the oar,

Happy is he who heareth
The signal of his release
In the bells of the Holy City,
The chimes of eternal peace!

BARBARA FRIETCHIE°

Up from the meadows rich with corn,
Clear in the cool September morn,

The clustered spires of Frederick stand
Green-walled by the hills of Maryland.

Round about them orchards sweep,
Apple and peach tree fruited deep,

Fair as the garden of the Lord
To the eyes of the famished rebel horde,

On that pleasant morn of the early fall
When Lee° marched over the mountain-wall, —

Over the mountains winding down,
Horse and foot, into Frederick town.

Forty flags with their silver stars,
Forty flags with their crimson bars,

Flapped in the morning wind: the sun
Of noon looked down, and saw not one.

Up rose old Barbara Frietchie then,
Bowed with her fourscore years and ten;

Bravest of all in Frederick town,
She took up the flag the men hauled down;

In her attic window the staff she set,
To show that one heart was loyal yet.

Up the street came the rebel tread,
Stonewall Jackson° riding ahead.

Under his slouched hat left and right
He glanced: the old flag met his sight.

"Halt!" — the dust-brown ranks stood fast.
"Fire!" — out blazed the rifle blast.

It shivered the window, pane and sash;
It rent the banner with seam and gash.

Quick, as it fell, from the broken staff
Dame Barbara snatched the silken scarf.

She leaned far out on the window-sill,
And shook it forth with a royal will.

"Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag," she said.

A shade of sadness, a blush of shame,
Over the face of the leader came;

The nobler nature within him stirred
To life at that woman's deed and word:

"Who touches a hair of yon gray head
Dies like a dog! March on!" he said.

All day long through Frederick street
Sounded the tread of marching feet:

All day long that free flag tost
Over the heads of the rebel host;

Ever its torn folds rose and fell
On the loyal winds that loved it well;

And through the hill-gaps sunset light
Shone over it with a warm good-night.

Barbara Frietchie's work is o'er,
And the Rebel rides on his raids no more.

Honor to her! and let a tear
Fall, for her sake, on Stonewall's bier.

Over Barbara Frietchie's grave,
Flag of Freedom and Union, wave!

Peace and order and beauty draw
Round thy symbol of light and law;

And ever the stars above look down
On thy stars below in Frederick town!

COBBLER KEEZAR'S VISION°

The beaver cut his timber
With patient teeth that day,
The minks were fish-wards, and the crows
Surveyors of highway, —

When Keezar sat on the hillside
Upon his cobbler's form,
With a pan of coals on either hand
To keep his waxed-ends warm.

And there, in the golden weather,
He stitched and hammered and sung;
In the brook he moistened his leather,
In the pewter mug his tongue.

Well he knew the tough old Teuton
Who brewed the stoutest ale,
And he paid the goodwife's reckoning
In the coin of song and tale.

The songs they still are singing
Who dress the hills of vine,
The tales that haunt the Brocken°
And whisper down the Rhine.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,
The swift stream wound away,
Through birches and scarlet maples
Flashing in foam and spray, —

Down on the sharp-horned ledges
Plunging in steep cascade,
Tossing its white-maned waters
Against the hemlock's shade.

Woodsy and wild and lonesome,
East and west and north and south;
Only the village of fishers
Down at the river's mouth;

Only here and there a clearing,
With its farm-house rude and new,
And tree-stumps, swart as Indians,
Where the scanty harvest grew.

No shout of home-bound reapers,
No vintage-song he heard,
And on the green no dancing feet
The merry violin stirred.

"Why should folk be glum," said Keezar,
"When Nature herself is glad,
And the painted woods are laughing
At the faces so sour and sad?"

Small heed had the careless cobbler
What sorrow of heart was theirs
Who travailed in pain with the births of God,
And planted a State with prayers, —

Hunting of witches and warlocks,
Smiting the heathen horde, —
One hand on the mason's trowel,
And one on the soldier's sword!

But give him his ale and cider,
Give him his pipe and song,
Little he cared for Church or State,
Or the balance of right and wrong.

"'Tis work, work, work," he muttered, —
"And for rest a snuffle of psalms!"
He smote on his leathern apron
With his brown and waxen palms.

"Oh for the purple harvests
Of the days when I was young!
For the merry grape-stained maidens,
And the pleasant songs they sung!

"Oh for the breath of vineyards,
Of apples and nuts and wine!
For an oar to row and a breeze to blow
Down the grand old river Rhine!"

A tear in his blue eye glistened,
And dropped on his beard so gray.
"Old, old am I," said Keezar,
"And the Rhine flows far away!"

But a cunning man was the cobbler;
He could call the birds from the trees,
Charm the black snake out of the ledges,
And bring back the swarming bees.

All the virtues of herbs and metals,
All the lore of the woods, he knew,
And the arts of the Old World mingled
With the marvels of the New.

Well he knew the tricks of magic,
And the lapstone on his knee.
Had the gift of the Mormon's goggles
Or the stone of Doctor Dee.°

For the mighty master Agrippa°
Wrought it with spell and rhyme
From a fragment of mystic moonstone
In the tower of Nettesheim.

To a cobbler Minnesinger°
The marvellous stone gave he, —
And he gave it, in turn, to Keezar,
Who brought it over the sea.

He held up that mystic lapstone,
He held it up like a lens,
And he counted the long years coming
By twenties and by tens.

"One hundred years," quoth Keezar,
"And fifty have I told:
Now open the new before me,
And shout me out the old!"

Like a cloud of mist, the blackness
Rolled from the magic stone,
And a marvellous picture mingled
The unknown and the known.

Still ran the stream to the river,
And river and ocean joined;
And there were the bluffs and the blue sea-line,
And cold north hills behind.

But the mighty forest was broken
By many a steepled town,
By many a white-walled farm-house,
And many a garner brown.

Turning a score of mill-wheels,
The stream no more ran free;
White sails on the winding river,
White sails on the far-off sea.

Below in the noisy village
The flags were floating gay,
And shone on a thousand faces
The light of a holiday.

Swiftly the rival ploughmen
Turned the brown earth from their shares;
Here were the farmer's treasures,
There were the craftsman's wares.

Golden the goodwife's butter,
Ruby her currant-wine;
Grand were the strutting turkeys,
Fat were the beeves and swine.

Yellow and red were the apples,
And the ripe pears russet-brown,
And the peaches had stolen blushes
From the girls who shook them down.

And with blooms of hill and wild-wood,
That shame the toil of art,
Mingled the gorgeous blossoms
Of the garden's tropic heart.

"What is it I see?" said Keezar:
"Am I here, or am I there?
Is it a fête at Bingen°?
Do I look on Frankfort fair?

"But where are the clowns and puppets,
And imps with horns and tail?
And where are the Rhenish flagons?
And where is the foaming ale?

"Strange things, I know, will happen, —
  Strange things the Lord permits;
But that droughty folk should be jolly
  Puzzles my poor old wits.

"Here are smiling manly faces,
  And the maiden's step is gay;
Nor sad by thinking, nor mad by drinking,
  Nor mopes, nor fools, are they.

"Here's pleasure without regretting,
  And good without abuse,
The holiday and the bridal
  Of beauty and of use.

"Here's a priest and there is a Quaker, —
  Do the cat and dog agree?
Have they burned the stocks for oven-wood?
  Have they cut down the gallows-tree?

"Would the old folk know their children?
  Would they own the graceless town,
With never a ranter to worry
  And never a witch to drown?"

Loud laughed the cobbler Keezar,
  Laughed like a school-boy gay;
Tossing his arms above him,
  The lapstone rolled away.

It rolled down the rugged hillside,
  It spun like a wheel bewitched,
It plunged through the leaning willows,
  And into the river pitched.

There, in the deep, dark water
The magic stone lies still,
Under the leaning willows,
In the shadow of the hill.

But oft the idle fisher
Sits on the shadowy bank,
And his dreams make marvellous pictures
Where the wizard's lapstone sank.

And still, in the summer twilights,
When the river seems to run
Out from the inner glory,
Warm with the melted sun,

The weary mill-girl lingers
Beside the charmèd stream,
And the sky and the golden water
Shape and color her dream.

Fair wave the sunset gardens,
The rosy signals fly;
Her homestead beckons from the cloud,
And love goes sailing by.

AMY WENTWORTH°

TO W. B.

As they who watch by sick-beds find relief
Unwittingly from the great stress of grief
And anxious care in fantasies out-wrought
From the hearth's embers flickering low, or caught

From whispering wind, or tread of passing feet,
Or vagrant memory calling up some sweet
Snatch of old song or romance, whence or why
They scarcely know or ask, — so, thou and I,
Nursed in the faith that Truth alone is strong
In the endurance which outwearies Wrong,
With meek persistence baffling brutal force,
And trusting God against the universe, —
We, doomed to watch a strife we may not share
With other weapons than the patriot's prayer,
Yet owning, with full hearts and moistened eyes,
The awful beauty of self-sacrifice,
And wrung by keenest sympathy for all
Who give their loved ones for the living wall
'Twixt law and treason, — in this evil day
May haply find, through automatic play
Of pen and pencil, solace to our pain,
And hearten others with the strength we gain.
I know it has been said our times require
No play of art, nor dalliance with the lyre,
No weak essay with Fancy's chloroform
To calm the hot, mad pulses of the storm,
But the stern war-blast rather, such as sets
The battle's teeth of serried bayonets;
And pictures grim as Vernet's.° Yet with these
Some softer tints may blend, and milder keys
Relieve the storm-stunned ear. Let us keep sweet
If so we may, our hearts, even while we eat
The bitter harvest of our own device
And half a century's moral cowardice.
As Nürnberg sang while Wittenberg defied,°
And Kranach° painted by his Luther's side,
And through the war-march of the Puritan

The silver stream of Marvell's° music ran,
So let the household melodies be sung,
The pleasant pictures on the wall be hung, —
So let us hold against the hosts of night
And slavery all our vantage-ground of light.
Let Treason boast its savagery and shake
From its flag-folds its symbol rattle-snake,
Nurse its fine arts, lay human skins in tan,
And carve its pipe-bowls from the bones of man,
And make the tale of Fijian° banquets dull
By drinking whiskey from a loyal skull, —
But let us guard, till this sad war shall cease,
(God grant it soon!) the graceful arts of peace:
No foes are conquered who the victors teach
Their vandal manners and barbaric speech.

And while, with hearts of thankfulness, we bear
Of the great common burden our full share,
Let none upbraid us that the waves entice
Thy sea-dipped pencil, or some quaint device,
Rhythmic and sweet, beguiles my pen away
From the sharp strifes and sorrows of to-day.
Thus, while the east-wind keen from Labrador
Sings in the leafless elms, and from the shore
Of the great sea comes the monotonous roar
Of the long-breaking surf, and all the sky
Is gray with cloud, home-bound and dull, I try
To time a simple legend to the sounds
Of winds in the woods, and waves on pebbled bounds,—
A song for oars to chime with, such as might
Be sung by tired sea-painters, who at night
Look from their hemlock camps, by quiet cove
Or beach, moon-lighted, on the waves they love.

(So hast thou looked, when level sunset lay
On the calm bosom of some Eastern bay,
And all the spray-moist rocks and waves that rolled
Up the white sand-slopes flashed with ruddy gold.)
Something it has — a flavor of the sea,
And the sea's freedom — which reminds of thee.
Its faded picture, dimly smiling down
From the blurred fresco of the ancient town,
I have not touched with warmer tints in vain,
If, in this dark, sad year, it steals one thought from pain.

Her fingers shame the ivory keys
They dance so light along;
The bloom upon her parted lips
Is sweeter than the song.

O perfumed suitor, spare thy smiles
Her thoughts are not of thee;
She better loves the salted wind,
The voices of the sea.

Her heart is like an outbound ship
That at its anchor swings;
The murmur of the stranded shell
Is in the song she sings.

She sings, and, smiling, hears her praise,
But dreams the while of one
Who watches from his sea-blown deck
The icebergs in the sun.

She questions all the winds that blow,
And every fog-wreath dim,
And bids the sea-birds flying north
Bear messages to him.

She speeds them with the thanks of men
He perilled life to save,
And grateful prayers, like holy oil
To smooth for him the wave.

Brown Viking of the fishing-smack!
Fair toast of all the town! —
The skipper's jerkin ill beseems
The lady's silken gown!

But ne'er shall Amy Wentworth wear
For him the blush of shame
Who dares to set his manly gifts
Against her ancient name.

The stream is brightest at its spring,
And blood is not like wine;
Nor honored less than he who heirs
Is he who founds a line.

Full lightly shall the prize be won,
If love be Fortune's spur;
And never maiden stoops to him
Who lifts himself to her.

Her home is brave in Jaffrey Street,
With stately stairways worn
By feet of old Colonial knights
And ladies gentle-born.

Still green about its ample porch
The English ivy twines,
Trained back to show in English oak
The herald's carven signs.

And on her, from the wainscot old,
Ancestral faces frown, —
And this has worn the soldier's sword,
And that the judge's gown.

But, strong of will and proud as they,
She walks the gallery floor
As if she trod her sailor's deck
By stormy Labrador!

The sweetbrier blooms on Kitteryside,
And green are Elliot's bowers;
Her garden is the pebbled beach,
The mosses are her flowers.

She looks across the harbor-bar
To see the white gulls fly;
His greeting from the Northern sea
Is in their clanging cry.

She hums a song, and dreams that he,
As in its romance old,
Shall homeward ride with silken sails
And masts of beaten gold!

Oh, rank is good, and gold is fair,
And high and low mate ill;
But love has never known a law
Beyond its own sweet will!

THE COUNTESS

TO E. W.

I KNOW not, Time and Space so intervene,
Whether, still waiting with a trust serene,
Thou bearest up thy fourscore years and ten,
Or, called at last, art now Heaven's citizen;
But, here or there, a pleasant thought of thee,
Like an old friend, all day has been with me,
The shy, still boy, for whom thy kindly hand
Smoothed his hard pathway to the wonder-land
Of thought and fancy, in gray manhood yet
Keeps green the memory of his early debt.
To-day, when truth and falsehood speak their words
Through hot-lipped cannon and the teeth of swords,
Listening with quickened heart and ear intent
To each sharp clause of that stern argument,
I still can hear at times a softer note
Of the old pastoral music round me float,
While through the hot gleam of our civil strife
Looms the green mirage of a simpler life.
As, at his alien post, the sentinel
Drops the old bucket in the homestead well,
And hears old voices in the winds that toss
Above his head the live-oak's beard of moss,
So, in our trial-time, and under skies
Shadowed by swords like Islam's paradise,
I wait and watch, and let my fancy stray
To milder scenes and youth's Arcadian day;
And howsoe'er the pencil dipped in dreams
Shades the brown woods or tints the sunset streams,

The country doctor in the foreground seems,
Whose ancient sulky down the village lanes
Dragged, like a war-car, captive ills and pains.
I could not paint the scenery of my song,
Mindless of one who looked thereon so long;
Who, night and day, on duty's lonely round,
Made friends o' the woods and rocks, and knew the sound
Of each small brook, and what the hillside trees
Said to the winds that touched their leafy keys;
Who saw so keenly and so well could paint
The village-folk, with all their humors quaint, —
The parson ambling on his wall-eyed roan,
Grave and erect, with white hair backward blown;
The tough old boatman, half amphibious grown;
The muttering witch-wife of the gossip's tale,
And the loud straggler levying his blackmail, —
Old customs, habits, superstitions, fears,
All that lies buried under fifty years.
To thee, as is most fit, I bring my lay,
And, grateful, own the debt I cannot pay.

Over the wooded northern ridge,
  Between its houses brown,
To the dark tunnel of the bridge
  The street comes straggling down.

You catch a glimpse, through birch and pine,
  Of gable, roof, and porch,
The tavern with its swinging sign
  The sharp horn of the church.

The river's steel-blue crescent curves
To meet, in ebb and flow,
The single broken wharf that serves
For sloop and gundelow.

With salt sea-scents along its shores
The heavy hay-boats crawl,
The long antennæ of their oars
In lazy rise and fall.

Along the gray abutment's wall,
The idle shad-net dries;
The toll-man in his cobbler's stall
Sits smoking with closed eyes.

You hear the pier's low undertone
Of waves that chafe and gnaw;
You start, — a skipper's horn is blown
To raise the creaking draw.

At times a blacksmith's anvil sounds
With slow and sluggard beat,
Or stage-coach on its dusty rounds
Wakes up the staring street.

A place for idle eyes and ears,
A cobwebbed nook of dreams;
Left by the stream whose waves are years
The stranded village seems.

And there, like other moss and rust,
The native dweller clings,
And keeps, in uninquiring trust,
The old, dull round of things.

The fisher drops his patient lines,
  The farmer sows his grain,
Content to hear the murmuring pines
  Instead of railroad-train.

Go where, along the tangled steep
  That slopes against the west,
The hamlet's buried idlers sleep
  In still profounder rest.

Throw back the locust's flowery plume,
  The birch's pale-green scarf,
And break the web of brier and bloom
  From name and epitaph.

A simple muster-roll of death,
  Of pomp and romance shorn,
The dry, old names that common breath
  Has cheapened and outworn.

Yet pause by one low mound, and part
  The wild vines o'er it laced,
And read the words by rustic art
  Upon its headstone traced.

Haply yon white-haired villager
  Of fourscore years can say
What means the noble name of her
  Who sleeps with common clay.

And exile from the Gascon land
  Found refuge here and rest,
And loved, of all the village band,
  Its fairest and its best.

He knelt with her on Sabbath morns,
  He worshipped through her eyes,
And on the pride that doubts and scorns
  Stole in her faith's surprise.

Her simple daily life he saw
  By homeliest duties tried,
In all things by an untaught law
  Of fitness justified.

For her his rank aside he laid,
  He took the hue and tone
Of lowly life and toil, and made
  Her simple ways his own.

Yet still, in gay and careless ease,
  To harvest-field or dance
He brought the gentle courtesies,
  The nameless grace of France.

And she who taught him love not less
  From him she loved in turn
Caught in her sweet unconsciousness
  What love is quick to learn.

Each grew to each in pleased accord,
  Nor knew the gazing town
If she looked upward to her lord
  Or he to her looked down.

How sweet, when summer's day was o'er,
  His violin's mirth and wail,
The walk on pleasant Newbury's shore,
  The river's moonlit sail!

Ah! life is brief, though love be long;
The altar and the bier,
The burial hymn and bridal song,
Were both in one short year.

Her rest is quiet on the hill,
Beneath the locust's bloom:
Far off her lover sleeps as still
Within his scutcheoned tomb.

The Gascon lord,° the village maid,
In death still clasp their hands;
The love that levels rank and grade
Unites their severed lands.

What matter whose the hillside grave,
Or whose the blazoned stone?
Forever to her western wave
Shall whisper blue Garonne°!

O Love! — so hallowing every soil
That gives thy sweet flower room,
Wherever, nursed by ease or toil,
The human heart takes bloom! —

Plant of lost Eden, from the sod
Of sinful earth unriven,
White blossom of the trees of God
Dropped down to us from heaven! —

This tangled waste of mound and stone
Is holy for thy sake;
A sweetness which is all thy own
Breathes out from fern and brake.

And while ancestral pride shall twine
The Gascon's tomb with flowers,
Fall sweetly here, O song of mine,
With summer's bloom and showers!

And let the lines that severed seem
Unite again in thee,
As western wave and Gallic° stream
Are mingled in one sea!

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS

THE FROST SPIRIT°

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes!
You may trace his footsteps now
On the naked woods and the blasted fields and the brown hill's withered brow.
He has smitten the leaves of the gray old trees where their pleasant green came forth,
And the winds which follow wherever he goes, have shaken them down to earth.

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! — from the frozen Labrador, —
From the icy bridge of the Northern seas, which the white bear wanders o'er, —
Where the fisherman's sail is stiff with ice, and the luckless forms below
In the sunless cold of the lingering night into marble statues grow!

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! —
on the rushing Northern blast,
And the dark Norwegian pines have bowed as his fearful breath went past.
With an unscorched wing he has hurried on, where the fires of Hecla° glow
On the darkly beautiful sky above and the ancient ice below.

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! —
and the quiet lake shall feel
The torpid touch of his glazing breath, and ring to the skater's heel;
And the streams which danced on the broken rocks, or sang to the leaning grass,
Shall bow again to their winter chain, and in mournful silence pass.

He comes, — he comes, — the Frost Spirit comes! —
let us meet him as we may,
And turn with the light of the parlor-fire his evil power away;
And gather closer the circle round, when that firelight dances high,
And laugh at the shriek of the baffled Fiend as his sounding wing goes by!

RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE°

O Mother Earth! upon thy lap
Thy weary ones receiving,
And o'er them, silent as a dream,
Thy grassy mantle weaving,
Fold softly in thy long embrace

That heart so worn and broken,
And cool its pulse of fire beneath
Thy shadows old and oaken.

Shut out from him the bitter word
And serpent hiss of scorning;
Nor let the storms of yesterday
Disturb his quiet morning.
Breathe over him forgetfulness
Of all save deeds of kindness,
And, save to smiles of grateful eyes,
Press down his lids in blindness.

There, where with living ear and eye
He heard Potomac's flowing,
And, through his tall ancestral trees,
Saw autumn's sunset glowing,
He sleeps, — still looking to the west,
Beneath the dark wood shadow,
As if he still would see the sun
Sink down on wave and meadow.

Bard, Sage, and Tribune! — in himself
All moods of mind contrasting, —
The tenderest wail of human woe,
The scorn like lightning blasting;
The pathos which from rival eyes
Unwilling tears could summon,
The stinging taunt, the fiery burst
Of hatred scarcely human!

Mirth, sparkling like a diamond shower,
From lips of life-long sadness;

Clear picturings of majestic thought
Upon a ground of madness;
And over all Romance and Song
A classic beauty throwing,
And laurelled Clio° at his side
Her storied pages showing.

All parties feared him: each in turn
Beheld its schemes disjointed,
As right or left his fatal glance
And spectral finger pointed.
Sworn foe of Cant, he smote it down
With trenchant wit unsparing,
And, mocking, rent with ruthless hand
The robe Pretence was wearing.

Too honest or too proud to feign
A love he never cherished,
Beyond Virginia's border line
His patriotism perished.
While others hailed in distant skies
Our eagle's dusky pinion,
He only saw the mountain bird
Stoop o'er his Old Dominion!

Still through each change of fortune strange,
Racked nerve, and brain all burning,
His loving faith in Mother-land
Knew never shade of turning;
By Britain's lakes, by Neva's° wave,
Whatever sky was o'er him,
He heard her rivers' rushing sound,
Her blue peaks rose before him.

He held his slaves, yet made withal
No false and vain pretences,
Nor paid a lying priest to seek
For Scriptural defences.
His harshest words of proud rebuke,
His bitterest taunt and scorning,
Fell fire-like on the Northern brow
That bent to him in fawning.

He held his slaves; yet kept the while
His reverence for the Human;
In the dark vassals of his will
He saw but Man and Woman!
No hunter of God's outraged poor
His Roanoke valley entered;
No trader in the souls of men
Across his threshold ventured.

And when the old and wearied man
Lay down for his last sleeping,
And at his side, a slave no more,
His brother-man stood weeping,
His latest thought, his latest breath,
To Freedom's duty giving,
With failing tongue and trembling hand
The dying blest the living.

Oh, never bore his ancient State
A truer son or braver!
None trampling with a calmer scorn
On foreign hate or favor.
He knew her faults, yet never stooped
His proud and manly feeling

To poor excuses of the wrong
Or meanness of concealing.

But none beheld with clearer eye
The plague-spot o'er her spreading,
None heard more sure the steps of Doom
Along her future treading.
For her as for himself he spake,
When, his gaunt frame upbracing,
He traced with dying hand "REMORSE!"
And perished in the tracing.

As from the grave where Henry° sleeps,
From Vernon's weeping willow,
And from the grassy pall which hides
The Sage of Monticello,°
So from the leaf-strewn burial-stone
Of Randolph's lowly dwelling,
Virginia! o'er thy land of slaves
A warning voice is swelling!

And hark! from thy deserted fields
Are sadder warnings spoken,
From quenched hearths, where thy exiled sons
Their household gods have broken.
The curse is on thee, — wolves for men,
And briers for corn-sheaves giving!
Oh, more than all thy dead renown
Were now one hero living!

THE NORSEMEN

GIFT from the cold and silent Past°!
A relic to the present cast;

Left on the ever-changing strand
Of shifting and unstable sand,
Which wastes beneath the steady chime
And beating of the waves of Time!
Who from its bed of primal rock
First wrenched thy dark, unshapely block?
Whose hand, of curious skill untaught,
Thy rude and savage outline wrought?

The waters of my native stream
Are glancing in the sun's warm beam:
From sail-urged keel and flashing oar
The circles widen to its shore:
And cultured field and peopled town
Slope to its willowed margin down.
Yet, while this morning breeze is bringing
The home-life sound of school-bells ringing,
And rolling wheel, and rapid jar
Of the fire-winged and steedless car,
And voices from the wayside near
Come quick and blended on my ear,
A spell is in this old gray stone, —
My thoughts are with the Past alone!

A change! — The steepled town no more
Stretches along the sail-thronged shore:
Like palace-domes in sunset's cloud,
Fade sun-gilt spire and mansion proud:
Spectrally rising where they stood,
I see the old, primeval wood:
Dark, shadow-like, on either hand
I see its solemn waste expand:
It climbs the green and cultured hill,

It arches o'er the valley's rill;
And leans from cliff and crag, to throw
Its wild arms o'er the stream below.
Unchanged, alone, the same bright river
Flows on, as it will flow forever!
I listen, and I hear the low
Soft ripple where its waters go;
I hear behind the panther's cry,
The wild-bird's scream goes thrilling by,
And shyly on the river's brink
The deer is stooping down to drink.

But hark! — from wood and rock flung back,
What sound comes up the Merrimack?
What sea-worn barks are those which throw
The light spray from each rushing prow?
Have they not in the North Sea's blast
Bowed to the waves the straining mast?
Their frozen sails the low, pale sun
Of Thulé's night° has shone upon;
Flapped by the sea-wind's gusty sweep
Round icy drift, and headland steep.
Wild Jutland's° wives and Lochlin's° daughters
Have watched them fading o'er the waters,
Lessening through driving mist and spray,
Like white-winged sea-birds on their way!

Onward they glide, — and now I view
Their iron-armed and stalwart crew;
Joy glistens in each wild blue eye,
Turned to green earth and summer sky:
Each broad, seamed breast has cast aside
Its cumbering vest of shaggy hide;

Bared to the sun and soft warm air,
Streams back the Norsemen's yellow hair.
I see the gleam of axe and spear,
The sound of smitten shields I hear,
Keeping a harsh and fitting time
To Saga's chant, and Runic rhyme°;
Such lays as Zetland's° Scald has sung,
His gray and naked isles among;
Or muttered low at midnight hour
Round Odin's° mossy stone of power.
The wolf beneath the Arctic moon
Has answered to that startling rune;
The Gael° has heard its stormy swell,
The light Frank° knows its summons well;
Iona's sable-stoled Culdee°
Has heard it sounding o'er the sea,
And swept, with hoary beard and hair,
His altar's foot in trembling prayer!

'Tis past, — the 'wildering vision dies
In darkness on my dreaming eyes!
The forest vanishes in air, —
Hill-slope and vale lie starkly bare;
I hear the common tread of men,
And hum of work-day life again:
The mystic relic seems alone
A broken mass of common stone;
And if it be the chiselled limb
Of Berserker° or idol grim, —
A fragment of Valhalla's° Thor,
The stormy Viking's god of War,
Or Praga of the Runic lay,
Or love-awakening Siona,°

I know not, — for no graven line,
Nor Druid° mark, nor Runic sign,
Is left me here, by which to trace
Its name, or origin, or place.
Yet, for this vision of the Past,
This glance upon its darkness cast
My spirit bows in gratitude
Before the Giver of all good,
Who fashioned so the human mind,
That, from the waste of Time behind
A simple stone, or mound of earth
Can summon the departed forth;
Quicken the Past to life again, —
The Present lose in what hath been,
And in their primal freshness show
The buried forms of long ago.
As if a portion of that Thought
By which the Eternal will is wrought
Whose impulse fills anew with breath
The frozen solitude of Death,
To mortal mind were sometimes lent
To mortal musings sometimes sent,
To whisper — even when it seems
But Memory's fantasy of dreams
Through the mind's waste of woe and sin,
Of an immortal origin?

FORGIVENESS°

My heart was heavy, for its trust had been
Abused, its kindness answered with foul wrong;
So, turning gloomily from my fellowmen,
One summer Sabbath day I strolled among

The green mounds of the village burial-place;
  Where, pondering how all human love and hate
  Find one sad level; and how, soon or late,
Wronged and wrongdoer, each with meekened face,
  And cold hands folded over a still heart,
Pass the green threshold of our common grave,
  Whither all footsteps tend, whence none depart,
Awed for myself, and pitying my race,
Our common sorrow, like a mighty wave,
Swept all my pride away, and trembling I forgave!

WHAT THE VOICE SAID

Maddened by Earth's wrong and evil,
  "Lord!" I cried in sudden ire,
"From Thy right hand, clothed with thunder,
  Shake the bolted fire!

"Love is lost, and Faith is dying;
  With the brute the man is sold;
And the dropping blood of Labor
  Hardens into gold.

"Here the dying wail of Famine,
  There the battle's groan of pain;
And, in silence, smooth-faced Mammon
  Reaping men like grain.

"'Where is God, that we should fear Him?'
  Thus the earth-born Titans° say;
'God, if Thou art living, hear us!'
  Thus the weak ones pray."

"Thou, the patient Heaven upbraiding,"
Spake a solemn Voice within;
"Weary of our Lord's forbearance,
Art thou free from sin?

"Fearless brow to Him uplifting,
Canst thou for His thunders call,
Knowing that to guilt's attraction
Evermore they fall?

"Know'st thou not all germs of evil
In thy heart await their time?
Not thyself, but God's restraining,
Stays their growth of crime.

"Couldst thou boast, O child of weakness!
O'er the sons of wrong and strife,
Were their strong temptations planted
In thy path of life?

"Thou hast seen two streamlets gushing
From one fountain, clear and free,
But by widely varying channels
Searching for the sea.

"Glideth one through greenest valleys,
Kissing them with lips still sweet;
One, mad roaring down the mountains,
Stagnates at their feet.

"Is it choice whereby the Parsee°
Kneels before his mother's fire?
In his black tent did the Tartar°
Choose his wandering sire?

"He alone, whose hand is bounding
Human power and human will,
Looking through each soul's surrounding,
Knows its good or ill.

"For thyself, while wrong and sorrow
Make to thee their strong appeal,
Coward wert thou not to utter
What the heart must feel.

"Earnest words must needs be spoken
When the warm heart bleeds or burns
With its scorn of wrong, or pity
For the wronged, by turns.

"But, by all thy nature's weakness,
Hidden faults and follies known,
Be thou, in rebuking evil,
Conscious of thine own.

"Not the less shall stern-eyed Duty
To thy lips her trumpet set,
But with harsher blasts shall mingle
Wailings of regret."

Cease not, Voice of holy speaking,
Teacher sent of God, be near,
Whispering through the day's cool silence,
Let my spirit hear!

So, when thoughts of evil-doers,
Waken scorn, or hatred move,
Shall a mournful fellow-feeling
Temper all with love.

EXTRACT FROM "A NEW ENGLAND LEGEND"°

How has New England's romance fled,
  Even as a vision of the morning!
Its rites foredone, — its guardians dead, —
Its priestesses, bereft of dread,
  Waking the veriest urchin's scorning!
Gone like the Indian wizard's yell
  And fire-dance round the magic rock,
Forgotten like the Druid's spell
  At moonrise by his holy oak!
No more along the shadowy glen,
Glide the dim ghosts of murdered men;
No more the unquiet churchyard dead
Glimpse upward from their turfy bed,
  Startling the traveller, late and lone;
As, on some night of starless weather,
They silently commune together,
  Each sitting on his own head-stone!
The roofless house, decayed, deserted,
Its living tenants all departed,
No longer rings with midnight revel
Of witch, or ghost, or goblin evil;
No pale blue flame sends out its flashes
Through creviced roof and shattered sashes! —
The witch-grass round the hazel spring
May sharply to the night-air sing,
But there no more shall withered hags
Refresh at ease their broomstick nags,
Or taste those hazel-shadowed waters
As beverage meet for Satan's daughters;
No more their mimic tones be heard, —
The mew of cat, — the chirp of bird, —

Shrill blending with the hoarser laughter
Of the fell demon, following after!

The cautious goodman nails no more
A horseshoe on his outer door,
Lest some unseemly hag should fit
To his own mouth her bridle-bit, —
The goodwife's churn no more refuses
Its wonted culinary uses
Until, with heated needle burned,
The witch has to her place returned!
Our witches are no longer old
And wrinkled beldames, Satan-sold,
But young and gay and laughing creatures,
With the heart's sunshine on their features, —
Their sorcery — the light which dances
Where the raised lid unveils its glances;
Or that low-breathed and gentle tone,
The music of Love's twilight hours,
Soft, dream-like, as a fairy's moan
Above her nightly closing flowers,
Sweeter than that which sighed of yore
Along the charmed Ausonian shore°!
Even she, our own weird heroine,
Sole Pythoness of ancient Lynn,
Sleeps calmly where the living laid her.
And the wide realm of sorcery,
Left by its latest mistress free,
Hath found no gray and skilled invader:
So perished Albion's° "glammarye,"°
With him in Melrose Abbey sleeping,°
His charmed torch beside his knee,
That even the dead himself might see

The magic scroll within his keeping.
And now our modern Yankee sees
Nor omens, spells, nor mysteries;
And naught above, below, around,
Of life or death, of sight or sound,
Whate'er its nature, form, or look,
Excites his terror or surprise, —
All seeming to his knowing eyes
Familiar as his "catechise,"°
Or "Webster's Spelling-Book."°

HAMPTON BEACH°

THE sunlight glitters keen and bright,
Where, miles away,
Lies stretching to my dazzled sight
A luminous belt, a misty light,
Beyond the dark pine bluffs and wastes of sandy gray.

The tremulous shadow of the Sea!
Against its ground
Of silvery light, rock, hill, and tree,
Still as a picture, clear and free,
With varying outline mark the coast for miles around.

On — on — we tread with loose-flung rein
Our seaward way,
Through dark-green fields and blossoming grain,
Where the wild brier-rose skirts the lane,
And bends above our heads the flowering locust spray.

Ha! like a kind hand on my brow
Comes this fresh breeze,

Cooling its dull and feverish glow,
While through my being seems to flow
The breath of a new life, — the healing of the seas!

Now rest we, where this grassy mound
His feet hath set
In the great waters, which have bound
His granite ankles greenly round
With long and tangled moss, and weeds with cool spray wet.

Good-by to pain and care! I take
Mine ease to-day:
Here where these sunny waters break,
And ripples this keen breeze, I shake
All burdens from the heart, all weary thoughts away.

I draw a freer breath — I seem
Like all I see —
Waves in the sun — the white-winged gleam
Of sea-birds in the slanting beam —
And far-off sails which flit before the south-wind free.

So when Time's veil shall fall asunder,
The soul may know
No fearful change, nor sudden wonder,
Nor sink the weight of mystery under,
But with the upward rise, and with the vastness grow.

And all we shrink from now may seem
No new revealing;

Familiar as our childhood's stream,
Or pleasant memory of a dream
The loved and cherished Past upon the new life stealing.

Serene and mild the untried light
May have its dawning;
And, as in summer's northern night
The evening and the dawn unite,
The sunset hues of Time blend with the soul's new morning.

I sit alone; in foam and spray
Wave after wave
Breaks on the rocks which, stern and gray,
Shoulder the broken tide away,
Or murmurs hoarse and strong through mossy cleft and cave.

What heed I of the dusty land
And noisy town?
I see the mighty deep expand
From its white line of glimmering sand
To where the blue of heaven on bluer waves shuts down!

In listless quietude of mind,
I yield to all
The change of cloud and wave and wind,
And passive on the flood reclined,
I wander with the waves, and with them rise and fall.

But look, thou dreamer! — wave and shore
In shadow lie;

The night-wind warns me back once more
To where, my native hill-tops o'er,
Bends like an arch of fire the glowing sunset sky.

So then, beach, bluff, and wave, farewell!
I bear with me
No token stone nor glittering shell,
But long and oft shall Memory tell
Of this brief thoughtful hour of musing by the Sea.

THE HILL-TOP °

THE burly driver at my side,
We slowly climbed the hill,
Whose summit, in the hot noontide,
Seemed rising, rising still.
At last, our short noon-shadows hid
The top-stone, bare and brown,
From whence, like Gizeh's pyramid,
The rough mass slanted down.

I felt the cool breath of the North;
Between me and the sun,
O'er deep, still lake, and ridgy earth,
I saw the cloud-shades run.
Before me, stretched for glistening miles,
Lay mountain-girdled Squam;
Like green-winged birds, the leafy isles
Upon its bosom swam.

And, glimmering through the sun-haze warm,
Far as the eye could roam,
Dark billows of an earthquake storm

Beflecked with clouds like foam,
Their vales in misty shadow deep,
Their rugged peaks in shine,
I saw the mountain ranges sweep
The horizon's northern line.

There towered Chocorua's peak; and west,
Moosehillock's woods were seen,
With many a nameless slide-scarred crest
And pine-dark gorge between.
Beyond them, like a sun-rimmed cloud,
The great Notch mountains shone,
Watched over by the solemn-browed
And awful face of stone!

"A good look-off!" the driver spake:
"About this time, last year,
I drove a party to the Lake,
And stopped, at evening, here.
'Twas duskish down below; but all
These hills stood in the sun,
Till, dipped behind yon purple wall,
He left them, one by one.

"A lady, who, from Thornton hill,
Had held her place outside,
And, as a pleasant woman will,
Had cheered the long, dull ride,
Besought me, with so sweet a smile,
That — though I hate delays —
I could not choose but rest awhile, —
(These women have such ways!)

"On yonder mossy ledge she sat,
Her sketch upon her knees,

A stray brown lock beneath her hat
Unrolling in the breeze;
Her sweet face, in the sunset light
Upraised and glorified, —
I never saw a prettier sight
In all my mountain ride.

"As good as fair; it seemed her joy
To comfort and to give;
My poor, sick wife, and cripple boy,
Will bless her while they live!"
The tremor in the driver's tone
His manhood did not shame:
"I dare say, sir, you may have known ——"
He named a well-known name.

Then sank the pyramidal mounds,
The blue lake fled away;
For mountain-scope a parlor's bounds,
A lighted hearth for day!
From lonely years and weary miles
The shadows fell apart;
Kind voices cheered, sweet human smiles
Shone warm into my heart.

We journeyed on; but earth and sky
Had power to charm no more;
Still dreamed my inward-turning eye
The dream of memory o'er.
Ah! human kindness, human love, —
To few who seek denied, —
Too late we learn to prize above
The whole round world beside!

MEMORIES°

A BEAUTIFUL and happy girl,
With step as light as summer air,
Eyes glad with smiles, and brow of pearl,
Shadowed by many a careless curl
Of unconfined and flowing hair;
A seeming child in everything,
Save thoughtful brow and ripening charms,
As Nature wears the smile of Spring
When sinking into Summer's arms.

A mind rejoicing in the light
Which melted through its graceful bower,
Leaf after leaf, dew-moist and bright,
And stainless in its holy white,
Unfolding like a morning flower:
A heart, which, like a fine-toned lute,
With every breath of feeling woke,
And, even when the tongue was mute,
From eye and lip in music spoke.

How thrills once more the lengthening chain
Of memory, at the thought of thee!
Old hopes, which long in dust have lain,
Old dreams, come thronging back again,
And boyhood lives again in me;
I feel its glow upon my cheek,
Its fulness of the heart is mine,
As when I leaned to hear thee speak,
Or raised my doubtful eye to thine.

I hear again thy low replies,
I feel thy arm within my own,

And timidly again uprise
The fringèd lids of hazel eyes,
With soft brown tresses overblown.
Ah! memories of sweet summer eves,
Of moonlit wave and willowy way,
Of stars and flowers, and dewy leaves,
And smiles and tones more dear than they!

Ere this, thy quiet eye hath smiled
My picture of thy youth to see,
When, half a woman, half a child
Thy very artlessness beguiled,
And folly's self seemed wise in thee;
I too can smile, when o'er that hour
The lights of memory backward stream,
Yet feel the while that manhood's power
Is vainer than my boyhood's dream.

Years have passed on, and left their trace
Of graver care and deeper thought;
And unto me the calm, cold face
Of manhood, and to thee the grace
Of woman's pensive beauty brought.
More wide, perchance, for blame than praise,
The schoolboy's humble name has flown;
Thine, in the green and quiet ways
Of unobtrusive goodness known.

And wider yet in thought and deed
Diverge our pathways, one in youth;
Thine the Genevan's sternest creed,
While answers to my spirit's need
The Derby dalesman's simple truth.

For thee, the priestly rite and prayer,
And holy day, and solemn psalm;
For me, the silent reverence where
My brethren gather, slow and calm.

Yet hath thy spirit left on me
An impress Time has worn not out,
And something of myself in thee,
A shadow from the past, I see,
Lingering, even yet, thy way about;
Not wholly can the heart unlearn
That lesson of its better hours,
Nor yet has Time's dull footstep worn
To common dust that path of flowers.

Thus, while at times before our eyes
The shadows melt, and fall apart,
And, smiling through them, round us lies
The warm light of our morning skies, —
The Indian Summer of the heart! —
In secret sympathies of mind,
In founts of feeling which retain
Their pure, fresh flow, we yet may find
Our early dreams not wholly vain!

ICHABOD![1]

So fallen! so lost! the light withdrawn
Which once he wore!
The glory from his gray hairs gone
For evermore!

Revile him not, — the Tempter hath
A snare for all;

And pitying tears, not scorn and wrath,
Befit his fall!

Oh, dumb be passion's stormy rage,
When he who might
Have lighted up and led his age
Falls back in night.

Scorn! would the angels laugh, to mark
A bright soul driven,
Fiend-goaded, down the endless dark,
From hope and heaven!

Let not the land once proud of him
Insult him now,
Nor brand with deeper shame his dim,
Dishonored brow.

But let its humbled sons, instead,
From sea to lake,
A long lament, as for the dead,
In sadness make.

Of all we loved and honored, naught
Save power remains, —
A fallen angel's pride of thought,
Still strong in chains.

All else is gone; from those great eyes
The soul has fled:
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead!

Then, pay the reverence of old days
To his dead fame;
Walk backward, with averted gaze,
And hide the shame!

ALL'S WELL

The clouds, which rise with thunder, slake
Our thirsty souls with rain;
The blow most dreaded falls to break
From off our limbs a chain;
And wrongs of man to man but make
The love of God more plain.
As through the shadowy lens of even
The eyes look farthest into heaven
On gleams of star and depths of blue
The glaring sunshine never knew!

SEED-TIME AND HARVEST

As o'er his furrowed fields which lie
Beneath a coldly-dropping sky,
Yet chill with winter's melted snow,
The husbandman goes forth to sow.

Thus, Freedom, on the bitter blast
The ventures of thy seed we cast,
And trust to warmer sun and rain
To swell the germs and fill the grain.

Who calls the glorious service hard?
Who deems it not its own reward?

Who, for its trials, counts it less
A cause of praise and thankfulness?

It may not be our lot to wield
The sickle in the ripened field;
Nor ours to hear, on summer eves,
The reaper's song among the sheaves.

Yet where our duty's task is wrought
In unison with God's great thought,
The near and future blend in one,
And whatsoe'er is willed, is done!

And ours the grateful service whence
Comes, day by day, the recompense;
The hope, the trust, the purpose stayed,
The fountain and the noonday shade.

And were this life the utmost span,
The only end and aim of man,
Better the toil of fields like these
Than waking dreams and slothful ease.

But life, though falling like our grain,
Like that revives and springs again;
And, early called, how blest are they
Who wait in heaven their harvest-day!

TO A. K.°

ON RECEIVING A BASKET OF SEA-MOSSES

Thanks for thy gift
Of ocean flowers,
Born where the golden drift

Of the slant sunshine falls
Down the green, tremulous walls
Of water, to the cool still coral bowers,
Where, under rainbows of perpetual showers,
God's gardens of the deep
His patient angels keep;
Gladdening the dim, strange solitude
With fairest forms and hues, and thus
For ever teaching us
The lesson which the many-colored skies,
The flowers, and leaves, and painted butterflies,
The deer's branched antlers, the gay bird that flings
The tropic sunshine from its golden wings,
The brightness of the human countenance,
Its play of smiles, the magic of a glance,
For evermore repeat,
In varied tones and sweet,
That beauty, in and of itself, is good.

O kind and generous friend, o'er whom
The sunset hues of Time are cast,
Painting, upon the overpast
And scattered clouds of noonday sorrow
The promise of a fairer morrow,
An earnest of the better life to come;
The binding of the spirit broken,
The warning to the erring spoken,
The comfort of the sad,
The eye to see, the hand to cull
Of common things the beautiful,
The absent heart made glad
By simple gift or graceful token
Of love it needs as daily food,

All own one Source, and all are good!
Hence, tracking sunny cove and reach,
Where spent waves glimmer up the beach,
And toss their gifts of weed and shell
From foamy curve and combing swell,
No unbefitting task was thine
To weave these flowers so soft and fair
In unison with His design
Who loveth beauty everywhere;
And makes in every zone and clime,
In ocean and in upper air,
"All things beautiful in their time."

For not alone in tones of awe and power
He speaks to man;
The cloudy horror of the thunder-shower
His rainbow span;
And where the caravan
Winds o'er the desert, leaving, as in air
The crane-flock leaves, no trace of passage there,
He gives the weary eye
The palm-leaf shadow for the hot noon hours,
And on its branches dry
Calls out the acacia's flowers;
And where the dark shaft pierces down
Beneath the mountain roots,
Seen by the miner's lamp alone,
The star-like crystal shoots;
So, where, the winds and waves below,
The coral-branchèd gardens grow,
His climbing weeds and mosses show,
Like foliage, on each stony bough,
Of varied hues more strangely gay

Than forest leaves in autumn's day; —
Thus evermore,
On sky, and wave, and shore,
An all-pervading beauty seems to say:
God's love and power are one; and they,
Who, like the thunder of a sultry day,
Smite to restore,
And they, who, like the gentle wind, uplift
The petals of the dew-wet flowers, and drift
Their perfume on the air,
Alike may serve Him, each, with their own gift,
Making their lives a prayer!

MOLOCH IN STATE STREET°

The moon has set: while yet the dawn
Breaks cold and gray,
Between the midnight and the morn
Bear off your prey!

On, swift and still! — the conscious street
Is panged and stirred;
Tread light! — that fall of serried feet
The dead have heard!

The first drawn blood of Freedom's veins°
Gushed where ye tread;
Lo! through the dusk the martyr-stains
Blush darkly red!

Beneath the slowly waning stars
And whitening day,

What stern and awful presence bars
That sacred way?

What faces frown upon ye, dark
With shame and pain?
Come these from Plymouth's Pilgrim barque?
Is that young Vane°?

Who, dimly beckoning, speed ye on
With mocking cheer?
Lo! spectral Andros, Hutchinson,°
And Gage° are here!

For ready mart or favoring blast
Through Moloch's fire
Flesh of his flesh, unsparing, passed
The Tyrian sire.°

Ye make that ancient sacrifice
Of Man to Gain,
Your traffic thrives, where Freedom dies,
Beneath the chain.

Ye sow to-day, your harvest, scorn
And hate, is near;
How think ye freemen, mountain born,
The tale will hear?

Thank God! our mother State can yet
Her fame retrieve;
To you and to your children let
The scandal cleave.

Chain Hall and Pulpit, Court and Press,
Make gods of gold;

Let honor, truth, and manliness
Like wares be sold.

Your hoards are great, your walls are strong,
But God is just;
The gilded chambers built by wrong
Invite the rust.

What! know ye not the gains of Crime
Are dust and dross;
Its ventures on the waves of time
Foredoomed to loss!

And still the Pilgrim State remains
What she hath been;
Her inland hills, her seaward plains,
Still nurture men!

Nor wholly lost the fallen mart, —
Her olden blood
Through many a free and generous heart
Still pours its flood.

That brave old blood, quick-flowing yet,
Shall know no check,
Till a free people's foot is set
On Slavery's neck.

Even now, the peal of bell° and gun,
And hills aflame,
Tell of the first great triumph won
In Freedom's name.

The long night dies: the welcome gray
Of dawn we see;
Speed up the heavens Thy perfect day,
God of the free!

1851

APRIL°

"The spring comes slowly up this way." *Christabel.*

'Tis the noon of the spring-time, yet never a bird
In the wind-shaken elm or the maple is heard;
For green meadow-grasses wide levels of snow,
And blowing of drifts where the crocus should blow;
Where wind-flower and violet, amber and white,
On south-sloping brooksides should smile in the light,
O'er the cold winter-beds of their late-waking roots
The frosty flake eddies, the ice-crystal shoots;
And, longing for light, under wind-driven heaps,
Round the boles of the pine-wood the ground-laurel creeps,
Unkissed of the sunshine, unbaptized of showers,
With buds scarcely swelled, which should burst into flowers!
We wait for thy coming, sweet wind of the south!
For the touch of thy light wings, the kiss of thy mouth;
For the yearly evangel thou bearest from God,
Resurrection and life to the graves of the sod!
Up our long river-valley, for days, have not ceased
The wail and the shriek of the bitter north-east, —
Raw and chill, as if winnowed through ices and snow,
All the way from the land of the wild Esquimau, —
Until all our dreams of the land of the blest,

Like that red hunter's, turn to the sunny south-west.
O soul of the spring-time, its light and its breath,
Bring warmth to this coldness, bring life to this death;
Renew the great miracle; let us behold
The stone from the mouth of the sepulchre rolled,
And Nature, like Lazarus,° rise, as of old!
Let our faith, which in darkness and coldness has lain,
Revive with the warmth and the brightness again,
And in blooming of flower and budding of tree
The symbols and types of our destiny see;
The life of the spring-time, the life of the whole,
And, as sun to the sleeping earth, love to the soul!

THE POOR VOTER ON ELECTION DAY

The proudest now is but my peer,
The highest not more high;
To-day, of all the weary year,
A king of men am I.
To-day, alike are great and small,
The nameless and the known;
My palace is the people's hall,
The ballot-box my throne!

Who serves to-day upon the list
Beside the served shall stand;
Alike the brown and wrinkled fist,
The gloved and dainty hand!
The rich is level with the poor,
The weak is strong to-day;
And sleekest broadcloth counts no more
Than homespun frock of gray.

To-day let pomp and vain pretence
My stubborn right abide;
I set a plain man's common sense
Against the pedant's pride.
To-day shall simple manhood try
The strength of gold and land;
The wide world has not wealth to buy
The power in my right hand!

While there's a grief to seek redress,
Or balance to adjust,
Where weighs our living manhood less
Than Mammon's vilest dust, —
While there's a right to need my vote,
A wrong to sweep away,
Up! clouted knee and ragged coat!
A man's a man to-day!

TO MY OLD SCHOOLMASTER°

AN EPISTLE NOT AFTER THE MANNER OF HORACE

Old friend, kind friend! lightly down
Drop time's snow-flakes on thy crown!
Never be thy shadow less,
Never fail thy cheerfulness;
Care, that kills the cat, may plough
Wrinkles in the miser's brow,
Deepen envy's spiteful frown,
Draw the mouths of bigots down,
Plague ambition's dream, and sit
Heavy on the hypocrite,
Haunt the rich man's door, and ride

In the gilded coach of pride; —
Let the fiend pass! — what can he
Find to do with such as thee?
Seldom comes that evil guest
Where the conscience lies at rest,
And brown health and quiet wit
Smiling on the threshold sit.
I, the urchin unto whom,
In that smoked and dingy room,
Where the district gave thee rule
O'er its ragged winter school,
Thou didst teach the mysteries
Of those weary A B C's, —
Where, to fill the every pause
Of thy wise and learned saws,
Through the cracked and crazy wall
Came the cradle-rock and squall,
And the goodman's voice, at strife
With his shrill and tipsy wife, —
Luring us by stories old,
With a comic unction told,
More than by the eloquence
Of terse birchen arguments
(Doubtful gain, I fear), to look
With complacence on a book! —
Where the genial pedagogue
Half forgot his rogues to flog,
Citing tale or apologue,
Wise and merry in its drift
As old Phædrus' twofold gift,°
Had the little rebels known it,
Risum et prudentiam monet°!
I, — the man of middle years,

In whose sable locks appears
Many a warning fleck of gray, —
Looking back to that far day,
And thy primal lessons, feel
Grateful smiles my lips unseal,
As, remembering thee, I blend
Olden teacher, present friend,
Wise with antiquarian search,
In the scrolls of State and Church:
Named on history's title-page,
Parish clerk and justice sage;
For the ferule's wholesome awe
Wielding now the sword of law.

Threshing Time's neglected sheaves,
Gathering up the scattered leaves
Which the wrinkled sibyl° cast
Careless from her as she passed, —
Twofold citizen art thou,
Freeman of the past and now.
He who bore thy name of old
Midway in the heavens did hold
Over Gibeon° moon and sun;
Thou hast bidden them backward run;
Of to-day the present ray
Flinging over yesterday!
Let the busy ones deride
What I deem of right thy pride:
Let the fools their tread-mills grind
Look not forward nor behind,
Shuffle in and wriggle out,
Veer with every breeze about,
Turning like a windmill sail,

Or a dog that seeks his tail;
Let them laugh to see thee fast
Tabernacled in the Past,
Working out with eye and lip,
Riddles of old penmanship,
Patient as Belzoni° there
Sorting out, with loving care,
Mummies of dead questions stripped
From their sevenfold manuscript!
Dabbling, in their noisy way,
In the puddles of to-day,
Little know they of that vast
Solemn ocean of the past,
On whose margin, wreck-bespread,
Thou art walking with the dead,
Questioning the stranded years,
Waking smiles, by turns, and tears,
As thou callest up again
Shapes the dust has long o'erlain, —
Fair-haired woman, bearded man,
Cavalier° and Puritan;
In an age whose eager view
Seeks but present things, and new,
Mad for party, sect and gold,
Teaching reverence for the old.

On that shore, with fowler's tact,
Coolly bagging fact on fact,
Naught amiss to thee can float,
Tale, or song, or anecdote;
Village gossip, centuries old,
Scandals by our grandams told,
What the pilgrim's table spread,

Where he lived, and whom he wed,
Long-drawn bill of wine and beer
For his ordination cheer,
Or the flip that well-nigh made
Glad his funeral cavalcade;
Weary prose, and poet's lines,
Flavored by their age, like wines,
Eulogistic of some quaint,
Doubtful, puritanic saint;
Lays that quickened husking jigs,
Jests that shook grave periwigs,
When the parson had his jokes
And his glass, like other folks;
Sermons that, for mortal hours,
Taxed our fathers' vital powers,
As the long nineteenthlies poured
Downward from the sounding-board,
And, for fire of Pentecost,°
Touched their beards December's frost.

Time is hastening on, and we
What our fathers are shall be, —
Shadow-shapes of memory!
Joined to that vast multitude
Where the great are but the good,
And the mind of strength shall prove
Weaker than the heart of love;
Pride of graybeard wisdom less
Than the infant's guilelessness,
And his song of sorrow more
Than the crown the Psalmist wore!
Who shall then, with pious zeal,
At our moss-grown thresholds kneel,

From a stained and stony page
Reading to a careless age,
With a patient eye like thine,
Prosing tale and limping line,
Names and words the hoary rime
Of the Past has made sublime?
Who shall work for us as well
The antiquarian's miracle?
Who to seeming life recall
Teacher grave and pupil small?
Who shall give to thee and me
Freeholds in futurity?

Well, whatever lot be mine,
Long and happy days be thine,
Ere thy full and honored age
Dates of time its latest page!
Squire for master, State for school,
Wisely lenient, live and rule;
Over grown-up knave and rogue
Play the watchful pedagogue;
Or, while pleasure smiles on duty,
At the call of youth and beauty,
Speak for them the spell of law
Which shall bar and bolt withdraw,
And the flaming sword remove
From the Paradise of Love.
Still, with undimmed eyesight, pore
Ancient tome and record o'er;
Still thy week-day lyrics croon,
Pitch in church the Sunday tune,
Showing something, in thy part,
Of the old Puritanic art,

Singer after Sternhold's° heart!
In thy pew, for many a year,
Homilies from Oldbug° hear,
Who to wit like that of South,°
And the Syrian's golden mouth,
Doth the homely pathos add
Which the pilgrim preachers had;
Breaking, like a child at play,
Glided idols of the day,
Cant of knave and pomp of fool
Tossing with his ridicule,
Yet, in earnest or in jest,
Ever keeping truth abreast.
And, when thou art called, at last,
To thy townsmen of the past,
Not as stranger shalt thou come;
Thou shalt find thyself at home!
With the little and the big,
Woollen cap and periwig,
Madam in her high-laced ruff,
Goody in her home-made stuff, —
Wise and simple, rich and poor!
Thou hast known them all before!

BURNS°

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF HEATHER IN BLOSSOM

No more these simple flowers belong
To Scottish maid and lover:
Sown in the common soil of song,
They bloom the wide world over.

In smiles and tears, in sun and showers,
The minstrel and the heather,
The deathless singer and the flowers
He sang of live together.

Wild heather-bells and Robert Burns!
The moorland flower and peasant!
How, at their mention, memory turns
Her pages old and pleasant!

The gray sky wears again its gold
And purple of adorning,
And manhood's noonday shadows hold
The dews of boyhood's morning.

The dews that washed the dust and soil
From off the wings of pleasure,
The sky, that flecked the ground of toil
With golden threads of leisure.

I call to mind the summer day,
The early harvest mowing,
The sky with sun and clouds at play,
And flowers with breezes blowing.

I hear the blackbird in the corn,
The locust in the haying:
And, like the fabled hunter's horn,
Old tunes my heart is playing.

How oft that day, with fond delay,
I sought the maple's shadow,
And sang with Burns the hours away,
Forgetful of the meadow!

Bees hummed, birds twittered, overhead
I heard the squirrels leaping,
The good dog listened while I read,
And wagged his tale in keeping.

I watched him while in sportive mood
I read "The Twa Dogs' "° story,
And half believed he understood
The poet's allegory.

Sweet day, sweet songs! — The golden hours
Grew brighter for that singing,
From brook and bird and meadow flowers
A dearer welcome bringing.

New light on home-seen nature beamed,
New glory over Woman;
And daily life and duty seemed
No longer poor and common.

I woke to find the simple truth
Of fact and feeling better
Than all the dreams that held my youth
A still repining debtor:

That Nature gives her handmaid, Art,
The themes of sweet discoursing;
The tender idyls of the heart
In every tongue rehearsing.

Why dream of lands of gold and pearl,
Of loving knight and lady,
When farmer boy and barefoot girl
Were wandering there already?

I saw through all familiar things
The romance underlying;
The joys and griefs that plume the wings
Of Fancy skyward flying.

I saw the same blithe day return,
The same sweet fall of even,
That rose on wooded Craigieburn,°
And sank on crystal Devon.°

I matched with Scotland's heathery hills
The sweetbrier and the clover;
With Ayr and Doon,° my native rills,
Their wood-hymns chanting over.

O'er rank and pomp, as he had seen,
I saw the Man uprising;
No longer common or unclean,
The child of God's baptizing!

With clearer eyes I saw the worth
Of life among the lowly;
The Bible at his cotter's hearth°
Had made my own more holy.

And if at times an evil strain,
To lawless love appealing,
Broke in upon the sweet refrain
Of pure and healthful feeling,

It died upon the eye and ear,
No inward answer gaining;
No heart had I to see or hear
The discord and the staining.

Let those who never erred forget
His worth, in vain bewailings;
Sweet Soul of Song! — I own my debt
Uncancelled by his failings!

Lament who will the ribald line
Which tells his lapse from duty,
How kissed the maddening lips of wine
Or wanton ones of beauty;

But think, while falls that shade between
The erring one and Heaven,
That he who loved like Magdalen,
Like her may be forgiven.

Not his the song whose thunderous chime
Eternal echoes render —
The mournful Tuscan's° haunted rhyme,
And Milton's starry splendor!

But who his human heart has laid
To Nature's bosom nearer?
Who sweetened toil like him, or paid
To love a tribute dearer?

Through all his tuneful art, how strong
The human feeling gushes!
The very moonlight of his song
Is warm with smiles and blushes!

Give lettered pomp to teeth of Time,
So "Bonnie Doon" but tarry;
Blot out the Epic's stately rhyme,
But spare his Highland Mary°!

THE VOICES

"Why urge the long, unequal fight,
Since Truth has fallen in the street,
Or lift anew the trampled light,
Quenched by the heedless million's feet?

"Give o'er the thankless task; forsake
The fools who know not ill from good:
Eat, drink, enjoy thy own, and take
Thine ease among the multitude.

"Live out thyself; with others share
Thy proper life no more; assume
The unconcern of sun and air,
For life or death, or blight or bloom.

"The mountain pine looks calmly on
The fires that scourge the plains below,
Nor heeds the eagle in the sun
The small birds piping in the snow!

"The world is God's, not thine; let Him
Work out a change, if change must be:
The hand that planted best can trim
And nurse the old unfruitful tree."

So spake the Tempter, when the light
Of sun and stars had left the sky,
I listened, through the cloud and night,
And heard, methought, a voice reply:

"Thy task may well seem over-hard,
Who scatterest in a thankless soil

Thy life as seed, with no reward
Save that which Duty gives to Toil.

"Not wholly is thy heart resigned
To Heaven's benign and just decree,
Which, linking thee with all thy kind,
Transmits their joys and griefs to thee.

"Break off that sacred chain, and turn
Back on thyself thy love and care;
Be thou thine own mean idol, burn
Faith, Hope, and Trust, thy children, there.

"Released from that fraternal law
Which shares the common bale and bliss,
No sadder lot could Folly draw,
Or Sin provoke from Fate, than this.

"The meal unshared is food unblest:
Thou hoard'st in vain what love should spend;
Self-ease is pain; thy only rest
Is labor for a worthy end.

"A toil that gains with what it yields,
And scatters to its own increase,
And hears, while sowing outward fields,
The harvest-song of inward peace.

"Free-lipped the liberal streamlets run,
Free shines for all the healthful ray;
The still pool stagnates in the sun,
The lurid earth-fire haunts decay!

"What is it that the crowd requite
Thy love with hate, thy truth with lies?

And but to faith, and not to sight,
The walls of Freedom's temple rise?

"Yet do thy work; it shall succeed
In thine or in another's day;
And, if denied the victor's meed,
Thou shalt not lack the toiler's pay.

"Faith shares the future's promise; Love's
Self-offering is a triumph won;
And each good thought or action moves
The dark world nearer to the sun.

"Then faint not, falter not, nor plead
Thy weakness; truth itself is strong;
The lion's strength, the eagle's speed,
Are not alone vouchsafed to wrong.

"Thy nature, which, through fire and flood,
To place or gain finds out its way,
Hath power to seek the highest good,
And duty's holiest call obey!

"Strivest thou in darkness? — Foes without
In league with traitor thoughts within;
Thy night-watch kept with trembling doubt
And pale remorse the ghost of Sin? —

"Hast thou not, on some week of storm,
Seen the sweet Sabbath breaking fair,
And cloud and shadow, sunlit, form
The curtains of its tent of prayer?

"So, haply, when thy task shall end,
The wrong shall lose itself in right,
And all thy week-day darkness blend
With the long Sabbath of the light!"

THE HERO°

"O FOR a knight like Bayard,°
Without reproach or fear;
My light glove on his casque of steel,
My love-knot on his spear!

"O for the white plume floating
Sad Zutphen's° field above, —
The lion heart in battle,
The woman's heart in love!

"O that man once more were manly,
Woman's pride, and not her scorn:
That once more the pale young mother
Dared to boast 'a man is born'!

"But, now life's slumberous current
No sun-bowed cascade wakes;
No tall, heroic manhood
The level dulness breaks.

"O for a knight like Bayard,
Without reproach or fear;
My light glove on his casque of steel,
My love-knot on his spear!"

Then I said, my own heart throbbing
To the time her proud pulse beat,

"Life hath its regal natures yet, —
True, tender, brave, and sweet!

"Smile not, fair unbeliever!
One man, at least, I know,
Who might wear the crest of Bayard
Or Sidney's plume of snow.

"Once, when over purple mountains
Died away the Grecian sun,
And the far Cyllenian° ranges
Paled and darkened, one by one, —

"Fell the Turk, a bolt of thunder,
Cleaving all the quiet sky,
And against his sharp steel lightnings
Stood the Suliote° but to die.

"Woe for the weak and halting!
The crescent blazed behind
A curving line of sabres,
Like fire before the wind!

"Last to fly, and first to rally,
Rode he of whom I speak,
When, groaning in his bridle-path,
Sank down a wounded Greek.

"With the rich Albanian° costume
Wet with many a ghastly stain,
Gazing on earth and sky as one
Who might not gaze again!

"He looked forward to the mountains,
Back on foes that never spare,

Then flung him from his saddle,
And placed the stranger there.

"'Allah!° hu!' Through flashing sabres,
Through a stormy hail of lead,
The good Thessalian° charger
Up the slopes of olives sped.

"Hot spurred the turbaned riders,
He almost felt their breath,
Where a mountain stream rolled darkly down
Between the hills and death.

"One brave and manful struggle, —
He gained the solid land,
And the cover of the mountains,
And the carbines of his band!"

"It was very great and noble,"
Said the moist-eyed listener then,
"But one brave deed makes no hero;
Tell me what he since hath been!"

"Still a brave and generous manhood,
Still an honor without stain,
In the prison of the Kaiser,
By the barricades of Seine.°

"But dream not helm and harness
The sign of valor true;
Peace hath higher tests of manhood
Than battle ever knew.

"Wouldst know him now? Behold him,
The Cadmus° of the blind,

Giving the dumb lip language,
The idiot clay a mind.

"Walking his round of duty
Serenely day by day,
With the strong man's hand of labor
And childhood's heart of play.

"True as the knights of story,
Sir Lancelot and his peers,°
Brave in his calm endurance
As they in tilt of spears.

"As waves in stillest waters,
As stars in noonday skies,
All that wakes to noble action
In his noon of calmness lies.

"Wherever outraged Nature
Asks word or action brave,
Wherever struggles labor,
Wherever groans a slave, —

"Wherever rise the peoples,
Wherever sinks a throne,
The throbbing heart of Freedom finds
An answer in his own.

"Knight of a better era,
Without reproach or fear!
Said I not well that Bayards
And Sidneys still are here?"

THE BAREFOOT BOY°

Blessings on thee, little man,
Barefoot boy, with cheek of tan!
With thy turned-up pantaloons,
And thy merry whistled tunes;
With thy red lip, redder still
Kissed by strawberries on the hill;
With the sunshine on thy face,
Through thy torn brim's jaunty grace;
From my heart I give thee joy, —
I was once a barefoot boy!
Prince thou art, — the grown-up man
Only is republican.
Let the million-dollared ride!
Barefoot, trudging at his side,
Thou hast more than he can buy
In the reach of ear and eye, —
Outward sunshine, inward joy:
Blessings on thee, barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's painless play,
Sleep that wakes in laughing day,
Health that mocks the doctor's rules,
Knowledge never learned of schools,
Of the wild bee's morning chase,
Of the wildflower's time and place,
Flight of fowl and habitude
Of the tenants of the wood;
How the tortoise bears his shell,
How the woodchuck digs his cell,
And the ground-mole sinks his well;

How the robin feeds her young,
How the oriole's nest is hung;
Where the whitest lilies blow,
Where the freshest berries grow,
Where the groundnut trails its vine,
Where the wood-grape's clusters shine;
Of the black wasp's cunning way,
Mason of his walls of clay,
And the architectural plans
Of gray hornet artisans! —
For, eschewing books and tasks,
Nature answers all he asks;
Hand in hand with her he walks,
Face to face with her he talks,
Part and parcel of her joy, —
Blessings on the barefoot boy!

O for boyhood's time of June,
Crowding years in one brief moon,
When all things I heard or saw,
Me, their master, waited for.
I was rich in flowers and trees,
Humming-birds and honey-bees;
For my sport the squirrel played,
Plied the snouted mole his spade;
For my taste the blackberry cone
Purpled over hedge and stone;
Laughed the brook for my delight
Through the day and through the night,
Whispering at the garden wall,
Talked with me from fall to fall;
Mine the sand-rimmed pickerel pond,
Mine the walnut slopes beyond,

Mine, on bending orchard trees,
Apples of Hesperides°!
Still as my horizon grew,
Larger grew my riches too,
All the world I saw or knew
Seemed a complex Chinese toy,
Fashioned for a barefoot boy!

O for festal dainties spread,
Like my bowl of milk and bread, —
Pewter spoon and bowl of wood,
On the door-stone, gray and rude!
O'er me, like a regal tent,
Cloudy-ribbed, the sunset bent,
Purple-curtained, fringed with gold,
Looped in many a wind-swung fold;
While for music came the play
Of the pied frogs' orchestra;
And, to light the noisy choir,
Lit the fly his lamp of fire.
I was monarch: pomp and joy
Waited on the barefoot boy!

Cheerily, then, my little man,
Live and laugh, as boyhood can!
Though the flinty slopes be hard,
Stubble-speared the new-mown sward,
Every morn shall lead thee through
Fresh baptisms of the dew;
Every evening from thy feet
Shall the cool wind kiss the heat:
All too soon these feet must hide
In the prison cells of pride,

Lose the freedom of the sod,
Like a colt's for work be shod,
Made to tread the mills of toil,
Up and down in ceaseless moil;
Happy if their track be found
Never on forbidden ground;
Happy if they sink not in
Quick and treacherous sands of sin.
Ah! that thou couldst know thy joy,
Ere it passes, barefoot boy!

THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS°

We cross the prairie as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free!

We go to rear a wall of men
On Freedom's Southern line,
And plant beside the cotton-tree
The rugged Northern pine!

We're flowing from our native hills
As our free rivers flow;
The blessing of our Mother-land
Is on us as we go.

We go to plant her common schools
On distant prairie swells,
And give the Sabbaths of the wild
The music of her bells.

Upbearing, like the Ark of old,
The Bible in our van,
We go to test the truth of God
Against the fraud of man.

No pause, nor rest, save where the streams
That feed the Kansas run,
Save where our Pilgrim gonfalon
Shall flout the setting sun!

We'll tread the prairie as of old
Our fathers sailed the sea,
And make the West, as they the East,
The homestead of the free!

SONG OF SLAVES IN THE DESERT°

WHERE are we going? where are we going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

Lord of peoples, Lord of lands,
Look across these shining sands,
Through the furnace of the noon,
Through the white light of the moon,
Strong the Ghiblee wind is blowing,
Strange and large the world is growing!
Speak and tell us where we are going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

Bornou land was rich and good,
Wells of water, fields of food,
Dourra fields, and bloom of bean,

And the palm-tree cool and green:
Bornou land we see no longer,
Here we thirst, and here we hunger,
Here the Moor-man smites in anger:
Where are we going, Rubee?

When we went from Bornou land,
We were like the leaves and sand,
We were many, we are few;
Life has one, and death has two:
Whitened bones our path are showing,
Thou All-seeing, Thou All-knowing!
Hear us, tell us, where are we going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

Moons of marches from our eyes
Bornou land behind us lies;
Stranger round us day by day
Bends the desert circle gray;
Wild the waves of sand are flowing,
Hot the winds above them blowing, —
Lord of all things! — where are we going?
Where are we going, Rubee?

We are weak, but Thou art strong
Short our lives, but Thine is long;
We are blind, but Thou hast eyes;
We are fools, but Thou art wise!

Thou, our morrow's pathway knowing
Through the strange world round us growing,
Hear us, tell us where are we going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

THE LAST WALK IN AUTUMN°

I

O'ER the bare woods, whose outstretched hands
Plead with the leaden heavens in vain,
I see, beyond the valley lands,
The sea's long level dim with rain.
Around me all things, stark and dumb,
Seem praying for the snows to come,
And, for the summer bloom and greenness gone,
With winter's sunset lights and dazzling morn atone.

II

Along the river's summer walk,
The withered tufts of asters nod;
And trembles on its arid stalk
The hoar plume of the golden rod.
And on a ground of sombre fir,
And azure-studded juniper,
The silver birch its buds of purple shows,
And scarlet berries tell where bloomed the sweet wild-rose!

III

With mingled sound of horns and bells,
A far-heard clang, the wild geese fly,
Storm-sent, from Arctic moors and fells,
Like a great arrow through the sky,
Two dusky lines converged in one,

Chasing the southward-flying sun;
While the brave snow-bird and the hardy jay
Call to them from the pines, as if to bid them stay.

IV

I passed this way a year ago:
The wind blew south; the noon of day
Was warm as June's; and save that snow
Flecked the low mountains far away,
And that the vernal-seeming breeze
Mocked faded grass and leafless trees,
I might have dreamed of summer as I lay,
Watching the fallen leaves with the soft wind at play.

V

Since then, the winter blasts have piled
The white pagodas of the snow°
On these rough slopes, and, strong and wild,
Yon river, in its overflow
Of spring-time rain and sun, set free,
Crashed with its ices to the sea;
And over these gray fields, then green and gold,
The summer corn has waved, the thunder's organ rolled.

VI

Rich gift of God! A year of time!
What pomp of rise and shut of day,
What hues wherewith our Northern clime
Makes autumn's dropping woodlands gay,

What airs outblown from ferny dells,
And clover-bloom and sweetbrier smells,
What songs of brooks and birds, what fruit and flowers,
Green woods and moonlit snows, have in its round been ours!

VII

I know not how, in other lands,
The changing seasons come and go;
What splendors fall on Syrian sands,
What purple lights on Alpine snow!
Nor how the pomp of sunrise waits
On Venice at her watery gates;
A dream alone to me is Arno's° vale,
And the Alhambra's° halls are but a traveller's tale.

VIII

Yet, on life's current, he who drifts
Is one with him who rows or sails;
And he who wanders widest lifts
No more of beauty's jealous veils
Than he who from his doorway sees
The miracle of flowers and trees,
Feels the warm Orient in the noonday air,
And from cloud minaret° hears the sunset call to prayer!

IX

The eye may well be glad, that looks
Where Pharpar's° fountains rise and fall;

But he who sees his native brooks
Laugh in the sun, has seen them all.
The marble palaces of Ind°
Rise round him in the snow and wind;
From his lone sweetbrier Persian Hafiz° smiles,
And Rome's cathedra ° awe is in his woodland aisles.

X

And thus it is my fancy blends
The near at hand and far and rare;
And while the same horizon bends
Above the silver-sprinkled hair
Which flashed the light of morning skies
On childhood's wonder-lifted eyes,
Within its round of sea and sky and field,
Earth wheels with all her zones, the Kosmos° stands revealed.

XI

And thus the sick man on his bed,
The toiler to his task-work bound,
Behold their prison-walls outspread,
Their clipped horizon widen round!
While freedom-giving fancy waits,
Like Peter's angel at the gates,
The power is theirs to baffle care and pain,
To bring the lost world back, and make it theirs again!

XII

What lack of goodly company,
When masters of the ancient lyre

Obey my call, and trace for me
Their words of mingled tears and fire!
I talk with Bacon,° grave and wise,
I read the world with Pascal's° eyes;
And priest and sage, with solemn brows austere,
And poets, garland-bound, the Lords of Thought,
draw near.

XIII

Methinks, O friend, I hear thee say,
"In vain the human heart we mock;
Bring living guests who love the day,
Not ghosts who fly at crow of cock!
The herbs we share with flesh and blood
Are better than ambrosial food,
With laurelled shades." I grant it, nothing loath,
But doubly blessed is he who can partake of both.

XIV

He who might Plato's° banquet grace,
Have I not seen before me sit,
And watched his puritanic face,
With more than Eastern wisdom lit?
Shrewd mystic! who, upon the back
Of his Poor Richard's Almanack,°
Writing the Sufi's song, the Gentoo's dream,°
Links Menu's age of thought° to Fulton's age of steam!

XV

Here too, of answering love secure,
Have I not welcomed to my hearth

The gentle pilgrim troubadour,
Whose songs have girdled half the earth;
Whose pages, like the magic mat°
Whereon the Eastern lover sat,
Have borne me over Rhineland's purple vines,
And Nubia's tawny sands, and Phrygia's° mountain pines!

XVI

And he, who to the lettered wealth
Of ages adds the lore unpriced,
The wisdom and the moral health,
The ethics of the school of Christ;
The statesman° to his holy trust,
As the Athenian archon,° just,
Struck down,° exiled like him for truth alone,
Has he not graced my home with beauty all his own?

XVII

What greetings smile, what farewells wave,
What loved ones enter and depart!
The good, the beautiful, the brave,
The Heaven-lent treasures of the heart!
How conscious seems the frozen sod
And beechen slope whereon they trod!
The oak-leaves rustle, and the dry grass bends
Beneath the shadowy feet of lost or absent friends.

XVIII

Then ask not why to these bleak hills
I cling as clings the tufted moss,

To bear the winter's lingering chills,
The mocking spring's perpetual loss.
I dream of lands where summer smiles,
And soft winds blow from spicy isles,
But scarce would Ceylon's breath of flowers be sweet,
Could I not feel thy soil, New England, at my feet!

XIX

At times I long for gentler skies,
And bathe in dreams of softer air,
But homesick tears would fill the eyes
That saw the Cross without the Bear.°
The pine must whisper to the palm,
The north-wind break the tropic calm;
And with the dreamy languor of the Line,°
The North's keen virtue blend, and strength to beauty join.

XX

Better to stem with heart and hand
The roaring tide of life than lie,
Unmindful, on its flowery strand,
Of God's occasions drifting by!
Better with naked nerve to bear
The needles of this goading air,
Than, in the lap of sensual ease, forego
The godlike power to do, the godlike aim to know.

XXI

Home of my heart! to me more fair
Than gay Versailles or Windsor's halls,°

The painted, shingly town-house where
The freeman's vote for Freedom falls!
The simple roof where prayer is made,
Than Gothic groin° and colonnade;
The living temple of the heart of man,
Than Rome's sky-mocking vault, or many-spired
Milan°!

XXII

More dear thy equal village schools,
Where rich and poor the Bible read,
Than classic halls where Priestcraft rules,
And Learning wears the chains of Creed;
Thy glad Thanksgiving, gathering in
The shattered sheaves of home and kin,
Than the mad license following Lenten pains,
Or holidays of slaves who laugh and dance in chains.

XXIII

And sweet homes nestle in these dales,
And perch along these wooded swells;
And, blest beyond Arcadian vales,°
They hear the sound of Sabbath bells!
Here dwells no perfect man sublime,
Nor woman winged before her time,
But with the faults and follies of the race,
Old home-bred virtues hold their not unhonored place.

XXIV

Here manhood struggles for the sake
Of mother, sister, daughter, wife,

The graces and the loves which make
The music of the march of life;
And woman, in her daily round
Of duty, walks on holy ground.
No unpaid menial tills the soil, nor here
Is the bad lesson learned at human rights to sneer.

XXV

Then let the icy north-wind blow
The trumpets of the coming storm,
To arrowy sleet and blinding snow
Yon slanting lines of rain transform —
Young hearts shall hail the drifted cold,
As gayly as I did of old;
And I, who watch them through the frosty pane,
Unenvious, live in them my boyhood o'er again.

XXVI

And I will trust that He who heeds
The life that hides in mead and wold,
Who hangs yon alder's crimson beads,
And stains these mosses green and gold,
Will still, as He hath done, incline
His gracious care to me and mine;
Grant what we ask aright, from wrong debar,
And, as the earth grows dark, make brighter every star!

XXVII

I have not seen, I may not see,
My hopes for man take form in fact,

But God will give the victory
In due time; in that faith I act.
And he who sees the future sure,
The baffling present may endure,
And bless, meanwhile, the unseen Hand that leads
The heart's desires beyond the halting step of deeds.

XXVIII

And thou, my song, I send thee forth,
Where harsher songs of mine have flown;
Go, find a place at home and hearth
Where'er thy singer's name is known;
Revive for him the kindly thought
Of friends; and they who ove him not,
Touched by some strain of thine, perchance may take
The hands he proffers all, and thank him for thy sake.

THE MAYFLOWERS°

Sad Mayflower! watched by winter stars,
And nursed by winter gales,
With petals of the sleeted spars,
And leaves of frozen sails!

What had she in those dreary hours,
Within her ice-rimmed bay,
In common with the wild-wood flowers,
The first sweet smiles of May?

Yet, "God be praised!" the Pilgrim said,
Who saw the blossoms peer
Above the brown leaves, dry and dead,
"Behold our Mayflower here!"

"God wills it: here our rest shall be,
Our years of wandering o'er,
For us the Mayflower of the sea
Shall spread her sails no more."

O sacred flowers of faith and hope,
As sweetly now as then
Ye bloom on many a birchen slope,
In many a pine-dark glen.

Behind the sea-wall's rugged length,
Unchanged, your leaves unfold,
Like love behind the manly strength
Of the brave hearts of old.

So live the fathers in their sons,
Their sturdy faith be ours,
And ours the love that overruns
Its rocky strength with flowers.

The Pilgrim's wild and wintry day
Its shadow round us draws;
The Mayflower of his stormy bay,
Our Freedom's struggling cause.

But warmer suns ere long shall bring
To life the frozen sod;
And, through dead leaves of hope, shall spring
Afresh the flowers of God!

THE EVE OF ELECTION

From gold to gray
Our mild sweet day
Of Indian summer fades too soon;

But tenderly
Above the sea
Hangs, white and calm, the hunter's moon.

In its pale fire
The village spire
Shows like the zodiac's spectral lance;
The painted walls
Whereon it falls
Transfigured stand in marble trance!

O'er fallen leaves
The west-wind grieves,
Yet comes a seed-time round again;
And morn shall see
The State sown free
With baleful tares or healthful grain.

Along the street
The shadows meet
Of Destiny, whose hands conceal
The moulds of fate
That shape the State,
And make or mar the common weal.

Around I see
The powers that be;
I stand by Empire's primal springs;
And princes meet,
In every street.
And hear the tread of uncrowned kings!

Hark! through the crowd
The laugh runs loud,

Beneath the sad, rebuking moon.
God save the land
A careless hand
May shake or swerve ere morrow's noon!

No jest is this;
One cast amiss
May blast the hope of Freedom's year.
Oh, take me where
Are hearts of prayer,
And foreheads bowed in reverent fear!

Not lightly fall
Beyond recall
The written scrolls a breath can float;
The crowning fact
The kingliest act
Of Freedom, is the freeman's vote!

For pearls that gem
A diadem
The diver in the deep sea dies;
The regal right
We boast to-night
Is ours through costlier sacrifice;

The blood of Vane,°
His prison pain
Who traced the path the Pilgrim trod,
And hers whose faith
Drew strength from death,
And prayed her Russell° up to God!

Our hearts grow cold,
We lightly hold

A right which brave men died to gain;
The stake, the cord,
The axe, the sword,
Grim nurses at its birth of pain

The shadow rend,
And o'er us bend,
O martyrs, with your crowns and palms, —
Breathe through these throngs
Your battle songs,
Your scaffold prayers, and dungeon psalms!

Look from the sky,
Like God's great eye,
Thou solemn noon, with searching beam,
Till in the sight
Of thy pure light
Our mean self-seekings meaner seem.

Shame from our hearts
Unworthy arts,
The fraud designed, the purpose dark;
And smite away
The hands we lay
Profanely on the sacred ark.

To party claims
And private aims,
Reveal that august face of Truth,
Whereto are given
The age of heaven,
The beauty of immortal youth.

So shall our voice
Of sovereign choice

Swell the deep bass of duty done,
And strike the key
Of time to be,
When God and man shall speak as one!

MY PSALM

I MOURN no more my vanished years:
Beneath a tender rain,
An April rain of smiles and tears,
My heart is young again.

The west winds blow, and, singing low,
I hear the glad streams run;
The windows of my soul I throw
Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind
I look in hope or fear;
But, grateful, take the good I find,
The best of now and here.

I plough no more a desert land,
To harvest weed and tare;
The manna dropping from God's hand
Rebukes my painful care.

I break my pilgrim staff, — I lay
Aside the toiling oar;
The angel sought so far away
I welcome at my door,

The airs of spring may never play
Among the ripening corn,

Nor freshness of the flowers of May
Blow through the autumn morn;

Yet shall the blue-eyed gentian look
Through fringèd lids to heaven,
And the pale aster in the brook
Shall see its image given; —

The woods shall wear their robes of praise,
The south-wind softly sigh,
And sweet, calm days in golden haze
Melt down the amber sky.

Not less shall manly deed and word
Rebuke an age of wrong;
The graven flowers that wreathe the sword
Make not the blade less strong.

But smiting hands shall learn to heal, —
To build as to destroy;
Nor less my heart for others feel
That I the more enjoy.

All as God wills, who wisely heeds
To give or to withhold,
And knoweth more of all my needs
Than all my prayers have told!

Enough that blessings undeserved
Have marked my erring track; —
That wheresoe'er my feet have swerved,
His chastening turned me back; —

That more and more a Providence
Of love is understood,

Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good; —

That death seems but a covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight; —

That care and trial seem at last,
Through Memory's sun-set air,
Like mountain-ranges overpast,
In purple distance fair; —

That all the jarring notes of life
Seem blending in a psalm,
And all the angles of its strife
Slow rounding into calm.

And so the shadows fall apart,
And so the west-winds play;
And all the windows of my heart
I open to the day.

THY WILL BE DONE°

We see not, know not; all our way
Is night, — with Thee alone is day:
From out the torrent's troubled drift,
Above the storm our prayers we lift,
Thy will be done!

The flesh may fail, the heart may faint
But who are we to make complaint,

Or dare to plead, in times like these
The weakness of our love of ease?
Thy will be done!

We take with solemn thankfulness
Our burden up, nor ask it less,
And count it joy that even we
May suffer, serve, or wait for Thee,
Whose will be done!

Though dim as yet in tint and line,
We trace Thy picture's wise design,
And thank Thee that our age supplies
Its dark relief of sacrifice.
Thy will be done!

And if, in our unworthiness,
Thy sacrificial wine we press;
If from Thy ordeal's heated bars
Our feet are seamed with crimson scars,
Thy will be done!

If, for the age to come, this hour
Of trial hath vicarious power,
And, blest by Thee, our present pain,
Be Liberty's eternal gain,
Thy will be done!

Strike, Thou the Master, we Thy keys,
The anthem of the destinies!
The minor of Thy loftier strain,
Our hearts shall breathe the old refrain,
Thy will be done!

THE BATTLE AUTUMN OF 1862°

The flags of war like storm-birds fly,
The charging trumpets blow;
Yet rolls no thunder in the sky,
No earthquake strives below.

And, calm and patient, Nature keeps
Her ancient promise well,
Though o'er her bloom and greenness sweeps
The battle's breath of hell.

And still she walks in golden hours
Through harvest-happy farms,
And still she wears her fruits and flowers
Like jewels on her arms.

What mean the gladness of the plain
This joy of eve and morn,
The mirth that shakes the beard of grain
And yellow locks of corn?

Ah! eyes may well be full of tears,
And hearts with hate are hot;
But even-paced come round the years,
And Nature changes not.

She meets with smiles our bitter grief,
With songs our groans of pain;
She mocks with tint of flower and leaf
The war-field's crimson stain.

Still, in the cannon's pause, we hear
Her sweet thanksgiving-psalm;

Too near to God for doubt or fear,
She shares the eternal calm.

She knows the seed lies safe below
The fires that blast and burn;
For all the tears of blood we sow
She waits the rich return.

She sees with clearer eye than ours
The good of suffering born, —
The hearts that blossom like her flowers,
And ripen like her corn.

Oh, give to us, in times like these,
The vision of her eyes;
And make her fields and fruited trees
Our golden prophecies!

Oh, give to us her finer ear!
Above this stormy din,
We too would hear the bells of cheer
Ring peace and freedom in.

OUR RIVER°

FOR A SUMMER FESTIVAL AT "THE LAURELS" ON THE MERRIMACK

Once more on yonder laurelled height
The summer flowers have budded;
Once more with summer's golden light
The vales of home are flooded;

And once more, by the grace of Him
Of every good the Giver,
We sing upon its wooded rim
The praises of our river:

Its pines above, its waves below,
The west-wind down it blowing,
As fair as when the young Brissot°
Beheld it seaward flowing, —
And bore its memory o'er the deep,
To soothe a martyr's sadness,
And fresco, in his troubled sleep,
His prison-walls with gladness.

We know the world is rich with streams
Renowned in song and story,
Whose music murmurs through our dreams
Of human love and glory:
We know that Arno's banks° are fair,
And Rhine has castled shadows,
And, poet-tuned, the Doon and Ayr°
Go singing down their meadows.

But while, unpictured and unsung
By painter or by poet,
Our river waits the tuneful tongue
And cunning hand to show it, —
We only know the fond skies lean
Above it, warm with blessing,
And the sweet soul of our Undine°
Awakes to our caressing.

No fickle sun-god holds the flocks
That graze its shores in keeping;

No icy kiss of Dian° mocks
The youth beside it sleeping:
Our Christian river loveth most
The beautiful and human;
The heathen streams of Naiads° boast,
But ours of man and woman.

The miner in his cabin hears
The ripple we are hearing;
It whispers soft to homesick ears
Around the settler's clearing:
In Sacramento's vales of corn,
Or Santee's bloom of cotton,
Our river by its valley-born
Was never yet forgotten.

The drum rolls loud, — the bugle fills
The summer air with clangor;
The war-storm shakes the solid hills
Beneath its tread of anger;
Young eyes that last year smiled in ours
Now point the rifle's barrel,
And hands then stained with fruits and flowers
Bear redder stains of quarrel.

But blue skies smile, and flowers bloom on,
And rivers still keep flowing, —
The dear God still His rain and sun
On good and ill bestowing.
His pine-trees whisper, "Trust and wait!"
His flowers are prophesying
That all we dread of change or fall
His love is underlying.

And thou, O Mountain-born! — no more
  We ask the wise Allotter
Than for the firmness of thy shore,
  The calmness of thy water,
The cheerful lights that overlay
  Thy rugged slopes with beauty,
To match our spirits to our day
  And make a joy of duty.

LAUS DEO°!

It is done!
  Clang of bell and roar of gun
Send the tidings up and down.
  How the belfries rock and reel!
  How the great guns, peal on peal,
Fling the joy from town to town!

Ring, O bells!
  Every stroke exulting tells
Of the burial hour of crime.
  Loud and long, that all may hear,
  Ring for every listening ear
Of Eternity and Time!

Let us kneel:
  God's own voice is in that peal,
And this spot is holy ground.
  Lord, forgive us! What are we,
  That our eyes this glory see,
That our ears have heard the sound!

For the Lord
  On the whirlwind is abroad;

In the earthquake He has spoken
He has smitten with His thunder
The iron walls asunder
And the gates of brass are broken!

Loud and long
Lift the old exulting song;
Sing with Miriam° by the sea
He has cast the mighty down;
Horse and rider sink and drown;
He hath triumphed gloriously!

Did we dare,
In our agony of prayer,
Ask for more than He has done?
When was ever His right hand
Over any time or land
Stretched as now beneath the sun?

How they pale,
Ancient myth and song and tale,
In this wonder of our days,
When the cruel rod of war
Blossoms white with righteous law,
And the wrath of man is praise!

Blotted out!
All within and all about
Shall a fresher life begin;
Freer breathe the universe
As it rolls its heavy curse
On the dead and buried sin!

It is done!
In the circuit of the sun

Shall the sound thereof go forth.
It shall bid the sad rejoice,
It shall give the dumb a voice,
It shall belt with joy the earth!

Ring and swing,
Bells of joy! On morning's wing
Send the song of praise abroad!
With a sound of broken chains
Tell the nations that He reigns,
Who alone is Lord and God!

NOTES[1]

PROEM (Page 1)

This poem, written in 1847, soon after the publication of *Voices of Freedom*, is now placed at the beginning of all editions of Whittier's poems. It is an adequate statement of, at least, his earlier poetic aims, and is in all respects an admirable piece of self-criticism.

3. Edmund Spenser (1552?–1599) was one of the two greatest English masters of poetry before Shakespeare wrote his plays. The other of the two was Chaucer.

4. Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586), a contemporary of Spenser's, was the author of a popular romance called *Arcadia*, and of some poetry and criticism.

27. Andrew Marvell (1621–1678) was throughout almost his whole life contemporary with the far greater **John Milton** (1608–1671) the author of *Paradise Lost*. Marvell's lyrics, to which Whittier refers, were the product of his earlier life. Later he became, like Milton, absorbed in the exciting political events attending the downfall of Charles I, and his execution in 1649. These Puritan poets were, it is plain, particularly congenial to Whittier's temperament.

SNOW-BOUND[2] [1865] (Page 3)

Aside from the one large group of earlier poems inspired by his hatred of slavery, Whittier's poetry mainly expresses moods of contemplation and reminiscence, and finds its subjects in the simpler and homlier aspects of nature and humanity.

[1] The date given opposite the title of each poem in these notes is in each case the date of composition, rather than that of publication.

[2] The Whittier homestead at Haverhill is now the property of the Whittier Memorial Association. Its rooms have been restored as nearly as possible to the condition described in *Snow-Bound*. The house is open to the public, thousands of whom visit it annually.

Holmes styled him "the Woodthrush of Essex," and others have called him the Burns of New England, suggesting, however, in the latter case an analogy which must not be pressed too far.

Snow-Bound portrays the scenes of Whittier's early life. The house in which he was born is still standing in East Haverhill, Mass. It had been the family homestead for several generations, and is the scene of *Snow-Bound*. The characters in the poem are those who really lived or visited there when Whittier was a boy on his father's farm. They were his father and mother, his brother Matthew, his sisters Mary and Elizabeth, and his uncle and aunt, both unmarried. Besides these members of his own family, there were the schoolmaster, who boarded in the house, and, as an occasional visitor, Miss Harriet Livermore, a young woman of eccentric character and remarkable subsequent history. The family life was extremely simple. As literature there were in the house besides the Bible, only the almanac, the weekly newspaper, and a very few books, among which were a single volume of poems and, though held in great suspicion, "one harmless novel." "Story-telling," says Whittier, "was almost a necessary resource during the long winter evenings." Memories of Indian warfare, of hunting expeditions, and stories of witchcraft were still the common possession of the older people of the time.

Sweet and simple as its story is, *Snow-Bound* takes its strong hold upon us not merely because it is a description of the family life of the poet's own home; nor is it even because hundreds of people now living in near and distant parts of America can look back in memory to country homesteads of their own New England childhood, and find them, too, essentially pictured in *Snow-Bound*.

Love for Whittier and affection for New England may well be awakened by the poem; but no one should fail to see how, more deeply, it reveals without explaining them the strong and broad foundations of that New England character which embodies so much of human life at its best. And then finally the poem should be read as a piece of literature, for the sake of its own beautiful pictures and its beautiful words, which are, after all, perhaps the chief reason why we read poetry at all. In this connection *Snow-Bound* may well be compared with Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, and Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*.

The first quotation standing at the beginning of the poem is taken from an old book dated 1851, in Whittier's possession, which had formerly been owned by one Bantam, a reputed sorcerer, who once lived in the Piscataqua region of New Hampshire. The second quotation is from Emerson's *The Snow-storm.*

65. Pisa's leaning miracle. The famous Leaning Tower of Pisa in northern Italy is a round bell-tower or campanile, of white marble, eighty feet in height, which leans six feet out of the perpendicular. The probable cause of the deflection is the sinking of the ground on one side of the foundation.

77. Aladdin's wondrous cave. See *The Arabian Nights' Entertainment.*

90. Amun was an Egyptian, originally an Ethiopian, deity worshipped mainly in the form of a ram, or of a human being with a ram's head.

215. "The Chief of Gambia." This line and the four subsequent ones in italics "are taken from *The African Chief*, a poem by Mrs. Sarah Wentworth Morton (1759-1846). . . . This poem was included in *The American Preceptor*, a school-book which was in use in Whittier's boyhood." (Riverside edition of *Snow-Bound.*)

225. Memphremagog, a lake on the border between Vermont and Canada.

229. St. François' hemlock trees. There are several localities bearing this name in the country south of Quebec.

231. On Norman cap. The settlers of many regions of Canada were French, who still retain French customs and use the French language.

236. Salisbury lies at the mouth of the Merrimac River.

242. Great Boar's Head and Little Boar's Head are on the coast, south of Portsmouth, N.H.

243. The **Isles of Shoals** lie opposite the mouth of the Piscataqua River, near Portsmouth.

259. Cocheco is the modern Dover, N.H.

274. Piscataqua. See note on 243.

286. Painful Sewell's ancient tome. "Painful" here has an old meaning of "painstaking." William Sewel's *History of the Quakers* was a work greatly esteemed by the Quakers.

289. Chalkley's Journal was another Quaker document. Thomas Chalkley (died 1749) was a Quaker preacher. In his

Journal he describes how upon a certain voyage the ship's company fell short of food and water. "To stop their murmuring I told them," he says, "they should not need to cast lots, which was usual in such cases, which of us should die first, for I would freely offer up my life to do them good. One said, 'God bless you, I will not eat any of you.' Another said, 'He would die before he would eat of me'; and so said several. I can truly say on that occasion, at that time, my life was not dear to me, and that I was serious and ingenuous in my proposition." At that juncture a large dolphin arose by the ship's side, and "looked him in the face." Fortunately the creature "readily took a hook," and saved the company from further temptation.

305. The tangled ram. See the account of Abraham's intended sacrifice of Isaac, in *Genesis* xxii.

320. Apollonius Tyanæus, a Greek magician and pretended miracle-worker of the first century A.D.

321. Hermes Trismegistus, an Egyptian philosopher of uncertain identity, to whom is ascribed the invention of the art of harmony, the lute, the lyre, the science of astrology, and many other things.

332. White of Selbourne. Gilbert White (1720-1793), distinguished English Naturalist, was the author of a classic work entitled *The Natural History of Selbourne*. Selbourne is situated in the County of Surrey, England.

398. Now bathed within the fadeless green. Elizabeth Whittier lived with her brother until her death in 1864. Her death was the poet's greatest bereavement.

439. The master of the district school was George Haskell, who afterwards became a physician, practising in Illinois, and afterward in New Jersey.

476. Pindus-born Araxes. The correct name is Aracthus. The stream is one of five taking their rise in the central peak of the Pindus Mountains in Greece.

510. Another guest. The other guest was Miss Harriet Livermore, the daughter of a New Hampshire judge. This brilliant but extremely eccentric woman embraced the doctrine of the Second Advent, and with this belief spent much of her life in Palestine and Arabia, in order to be at hand to ride with Christ into Jerusalem in his triumphal return to his earthly kingdom.

536. Petruchio's Kate is the heroine of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew.*

537. Siena's saint was St. Catherine; she was a seer of visions.

550. Smyrna is a seaport city of Syria.

551. Malta is an important island of the Mediterranean, near Sicily, owned by England.

555. The crazy Queen of Lebanon was Lady Hester Stanhope, an Englishwoman of good family, who dwelt in a palace on Mt. Lebanon in Palestine, in the same expectation as that held by Miss Livermore (see note on line 510). The two fell out in jealousy of each other's expected privileges.

669. Calvin's creed. John Calvin (1509–1564) was the founder of the form of religious belief which underlies Presbyterianism.

683. Thomas Ellwood, a Quaker poet of the seventeenth century, was a friend of Milton, and the author of an epic entitled *Davideis,* which now possesses only historical interest.

693. The **Creek Indians** were removed from their original home in Georgia to lands west of the Mississippi during Whittier's boyhood.

694. M'Gregor was a Scotchman who, in 1822, headed one of the earliest "filibustering" expeditions in Central America. The object of the expedition, the piratical seizing of territory whereon to found a colony, failed.

696. Mt. Taygetos, in Greece, is situated in the territory consecrated by the Greek struggle for freedom against Turkey. Alexander, Prince Ypsilanti, was one of the Greek revolutionary leaders. He drew followers from the province of Maina.

741. Truce of God was a name given to an historic compact in force during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, generally applying throughout Western Europe, whereby the barons were to do no fighting from Wednesday evening till Monday morning, or during Advent or Lent, or on principal saints' days. Pilgrims, priests, women, and merchants were to receive special exemption from pillage. Violation of the Truce was punishable by excommunication by the Church.

746. These Flemish pictures. Flemish or Dutch artists found favorite subjects for their paintings in domestic interiors.

SONGS OF LABOR (Page 28)

This group of poems was collected from the magazines in which they first appeared and published in book form in 1850

Though the forms of labor which gave titles to the various poems of the group have materially changed in the half century since they were written, the poems themselves breathe a spirit that has neither place nor time, and must always be contemporary. Perhaps in these poems, too, as much as in any, Whittier became not merely a poet of New England or of the North, but a poet of our national life.

DEDICATION [1850]

22. Beauty is its own excuse. "For the idea of this line," we are told by Whittier, "I am endebted to Emerson in his imitable sonnet to the Rhodora:—

> 'If eyes were made for seeing,
> Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.'"

THE SHIPBUILDERS [1846] (Page 30)

Compare this poem with Longfellow's *Building of the Ship*.

59. The Hebrides lie west of the northern part of Scotland.

69. No Lethean drug. The reference is to the Chinese opium trade.

THE SHOEMAKERS [1845] (Page 32)

2. The Gentle Craft of Leather. This expression is a reference to the mediæval organization in the chief European countries of those who practised certain occupations into guilds or crafts somewhat on the lines of the modern trades-unions. These guilds exercised at times vital influence of a social and political as well as industrial sort.

7. St. Crispin's day, October 25, commemorates a Christian martyr of the third century who had supported himself by making shoes, while he was a preacher of the gospel.

17. The Spanish main was that portion of the Atlantic between Cuba and the northern coast of South America, including the Caribbean Sea. It was so called particularly in the sixteenth century.

27. Florentine. Silk manufacture is an important industry of Florence in Northern Italy.

49. Hans Sachs (1497–1576) was a famous cobbler-poet of Nuremburg.

51. Robert Bloomfield (1766–1823), a little-remembered English poet, author of *The Farmer's Boy*, and **William Gifford** (1757–1826) a satirist and first editor of the *Quarterly Review*, were both in their early days shoemakers.

52. Roger Sherman (1721–1793), a signer of the Declaration of Independence, had been a shoemaker in New Milford, Connecticut.

54. Jacob Behmen, or Boehme, or Böhm (1494–1576), was a German mystic.

56. George Fox (1624–1690), an eccentric genius, who habitually clad himself in leather clothes, was founder of the sect of Quakers.

63. Hebe was cup-bearer at the banquets of the Olympian gods of the Greek mythology.

70. Saratoga in New York State was at the time of the writing of this poem a particular resort of fashionable society during the summer months.

72. The Crystal Mountains, an early name for the White Mountains of New Hampshire, derived from the discovery in them of crystals, at the time supposed to be precious stones.

THE DROVERS [1847] (Page 35)

60. Pharaoh's evil cattle. See *Genesis* xli. 2–4.

87. Kearsarge is a mountain near Concord, N.H. (2943 ft.).

THE FISHERMEN [1845] (Page 39)

22. Brador's rocks are in Prince Edward Island.

33. The Red Island lies in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland.

39. The Mickmacks are the tribe of Indians inhabiting Nova Scotia and the regions immediately to the north of it.

54. The fish of Tobit. The story of this fish is contained in the sixth, seventh, and eighth chapters of the apocryphal book of Tobit. The fish served as a charm which drove away an evil spirit from the bride of Tobias, the son of Tobit, and thereby saved Tobias from the fate of the lady's seven other previous husbands.

THE HUSKERS [1847] (Page 42) AND THE CORN-SONG [1847] (Page 45)

THE LUMBERMEN [1845] (Page 47)

33. Ambijejis. The localities mentioned in this stanza may all be found on any good map of the interior of Maine.

42. Mt. Katahdin is one of the highest mountains in New England, and the highest in Maine (5200 ft.).

CASSANDRA SOUTHWICK [1843] (Page 52)

A story of Quaker persecution. It was not uncommon to sell Quakers into slavery, or, in fact, criminals who had committed certain offences.

4. The Chaldean lions. See the story of Daniel in the lion's den, *Daniel* vi. 16–24.

30. Wenham, in Essex County, Mass.

49. Paul and Silas, within Philippi's cell. See *Acts* xvi. 19–40.

50. From Peter's sleeping limbs. See *Acts* xii. 1–17.

54. Hermon's holy hill. Mt. Hermon is a mountain in Syria on the borders of Palestine, often mentioned in the Old Testament.

84. Endicott. John Endicott (1589–1665) was colonial governor of Massachusetts in 1658.

99. The house of Rimmon. A deity in the form of an idol worshipped by the Syrians of Damascus.

119. Tekoa, a town of the early kingdom of Israel, west of the Dead Sea.

FUNERAL TREE OF THE SOKOKIS [1841] (Page 61)

1. Sebago Lake is in Cumberland County, Maine.

PENTUCKET [1838] (Page 65)

On August 30, 1708, a force of French and Indians, invading New England from Canada, attacked Haverhill, Mass., killing forty of the inhabitants, and carrying away one hundred. This is the event on which the poem is based. Haverhill was called by the Indians, Pentucket.

31. Pompeii was overwhelmed and buried with ashes by an eruption of Vesuvius in A.D. 79.

82. De Rouville was the French commander of the expedition.

THE EXILES [1841] (Page 68)

This spirited narrative of Quaker persecution gives a vivid picture of the intolerance of 1660 in Massachusetts. The treatment of Quakers equalled in severity that accorded to witches.

83. Preston Pans. This battle was fought between the Scotch forces of the young Stuart prince, Charles Edward, and the English on a field near Edinburgh; but as its date was 1745, it will be seen that in this instance Whittier's history is somewhat confused. **Marston Moor** was won by Cromwell's army against the Royalist forces of Charles I in 1644.

84. Ireton was one of the commanders of the Puritan forces in the battle of Marston Moor, and was the son-in-law of Cromwell.

85. The Puritans were those who held like principles with Cromwell in the controversies and warfare which resulted in the execution of Charles I in 1649. The followers of the king were popularly called **Cavaliers**. Generally speaking, the ancestors of the Massachusetts colonists were Puritans, and those of the colonists of Virginia, Cavaliers.

87 Prince Rupert, the nephew of Charles I, was the commander of the Cavalier forces at Marston Moor. **Oliver Cromwell** (1599–1658) is of course Charles's great opponent and conqueror.

95. Smitten ear. A reference to the act of the disciple Peter in cutting off the ear of the servant of the High Priest, at the time of Christ's betrayal by Judas. See *Luke* xxii. 50–51.

166. Crane-neck, and the other localities named in the following seven stanzas, are such as lie in or near the mouth of the Merrimac River in northeastern Massachusetts. The major ones may be identified upon a good map of the region.

197. Cape Ann lies to the south of the mouth of the Merrimac.

198. Gloucester, an important sea-coast town of Massachusetts, lies south of Cape Ann.

209. The bleak and stormy Cape which the adventurous Macey rounded in his wherry was Cape Cod.

211. Nantucket lies to the south of the peninsula of Cape Cod. The island had already been purchased by Macey and some of his neighbors to be a place of refuge in case of trouble with the Puritans.

THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA [1847] (Page 77)

This poem is based on incidents recorded in a letter describing the battle of Buena Vista (1847) in the Mexican War. One of the Mexican women, who gave such aid to the wounded as they were able, was found sharing her ministrations among friend and foe alike.

1. Ximena should be pronounced Hē mā′nä (Sp.).

BARCLAY OF URY [1847] (Page 81)

Barclay of Ury was, says Whittier, one of the earliest converts to the doctrines of the Quakers in Scotland. He had fought with distinction under the great Swedish king, Gustavus Adolphus, but, as a Quaker, was subjected to persecution and abuse. "I find more satisfaction," he said, "as well as honor, in being thus insulted for my religious principles, than when, a few years ago, it was usual for the magistrates, as I passed the city of Aberdeen, to meet me on the road and conduct me to public entertainment in their hall, and then escort me out again, to gain my favor."

1. Aberdeen is an important city in northeastern Scotland.

35. Lützen, near Leipzig, was the scene of a great battle between the Swedes and Germans in 1632, in which the Swedes were victorious, but lost their leader, Gustavus Adolphus, in the hour of triumph.

56. Tilly. Count von Tilly (1559–1632) was a fierce and merciless commander in the Thirty Years' War. His name became proverbial for barbarity.

81. The snooded daughter. The snood is a fillet which in Scotland binds, or used to bind, the hair of young girls.

99. The Tolbooth prison. Tolbooth itself is a Scottish word for prison.

THE LEGEND OF ST. MARK [1849] (Page 86)

The great Italian painter, Tintoretto (1518–1594), made the legend told in this poem the subject of a great picture. It is described by Mrs. Jameson, *Sacred and Legendary Art*, Vol. I, p. 121.

9. Tintoretto. An Italian painter, pupil of Titian. See preceding paragraph.

13. Provence was the name of an old province in the south-eastern part of France.

65. Dothan. For the story of Elisha at Dothan in Samaria of Palestine, see 2 *Kings* vi. 8–23.

KATHLEEN [1849] (Page 89)

In the colonial days of America, particularly in the seventeenth century, white slaves were not unknown. Sometimes they were kidnapped from seaport towns in Europe, sometimes they were sentenced to slavery for debt, for political offences, and for crime.

5. Galaway. Galway, see line 112, is a county in western Ireland.

13. Kern was a name for an Irish footman.

19. Shealing-fires, *i.e.* the fires in the cottages or huts of the peasants.

41. Limerick is an Irish seaport town.

49. The Banshee was a fairy in the Gaelic folk-lore.

TAULER [1853] (Page 93)

Johann Tauler, a religious thinker of dreamy tendencies, lived in Germany from 1290 to 1361.

62. The weary schoolmen. The schoolmen were mediæval scholars, chiefly monks, who, neglecting the facts of common experience, practised abstract speculation, and attained great skill in the art of disputation.

71. Erwin von Steinbach (died 1318) was a famous German architect.

MAUD MULLER [1854] (Page 96)

Among all Whittier's poems perhaps no ballad equals this one in its general popularity.

THE RANGER [1856] (Page 100)

"Originally published as *Martha Mason; a Song of the Old French War.*" (Author's note.)

11. The lion . . . Abraham's rock. The lion, here, is the symbol of British power, which had fortified the Plains of Abraham at Quebec.

37. Casco Bay is on the coast of Maine. Portland stands upon its shore.

THE WITCH'S DAUGHTER [1857] (Page 106)

This ballad, and the following six in these selections, were published together in 1860 under the title *Home Ballads.*

32. Derbyshire and **Yorkshire** are counties in the central and northeastern parts, respectively, of England.

33. Norman William was William I, called the Conqueror, who became king of England after the battle of Senlac in 1066.

35. The Saxon thane. In the days before William the Conqueror, England was ruled by Saxons, whose thanes possessed social rank equivalent to that of a baron.

36. The hovering Dane. The chief opponents and rivals of the Saxons in their control of England during the ninth and tenth centuries were the Danes, who occupied northern England, and finally in 1016, under Canute, made conquest of the whole of England.

82. Salem's dreary jail. Salem, Mass., was a centre of the persecution of witches in the middle of the seventeenth century in New England. Read Longfellow's *Giles Corey.*

THE GARRISON OF CAPE ANN [1857] (Page 114)

Cape Ann lies on the Massachusetts coast, north of Gloucester, which is alluded to in line 2.

8. Rantoul. Robert Rantoul (1805–1852) was a congress-

man from Massachusetts and a friend of Whittier's. Whittier has honored him with a poem bearing his name.

11. Magnalia Christi. *Magnalia Christi Americana* (The Great Deeds of Christ in America), by Cotton Mather.

12. Ovid. Publius Ovidius Naso (B.C. 43–A.D. 18) was an important Roman poet.

21. The Covenanter. In 1638 the Scottish Parliament made an agreement, ratified by the Parliament of England in 1643, for the preservation of the reformed religion of Scotland, and "the extirpation of Popery and Prelacy." The signers of this "Solemn League and Covenant" were called Covenanters and became after 1660 themselves the objects of bitter persecution. About 18,000 of them were put to death during three decades.

SKIPPER IRESON'S RIDE [1857] (Page 120)

This stirring ballad is based upon an incident which came to Whittier's ears in verse form in his boyhood. Whittier afterwards discovered that he had unwittingly perverted the facts of an actual occurrence, to the detriment of the memory of a real skipper, whose mutinous crew had thrown the blame on him for refusing to rescue sailors on a distressed vessel. He wrote to Samuel Roads, Jr., author of a *History of Marblehead*, "I am glad for the sake of truth and justice that the real facts are given in thy book. I certainly would not knowingly do injustice to any one, dead or living."

3. Apuleius's Golden Ass. Apuleius (114–190 A.D.), an African by birth, wrote an allegorical romance in eleven books, with this title. From it we get the episode of *Cupid and Psyche*.

4. One-eyed Calendar's horse of brass. See *The Arabian Nights' Entertainment*.

6. Islam's prophet on Al-Borák. Al-Borák was the animal which, according to the Koran, the angel Gabriel brought to convey Mahomet, the prophet of Islam, to the seventh heaven. It had the face of a man, the wings of an eagle, and spoke with a human voice.

26. Bacchus was the Roman god of wine.

30. The Mænads, a Greek form of the name given to the Bacchantes, women who were "worshippers" of Bacchus.

35. Chaleur Bay is an inlet of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

TELLING THE BEES [1858] (Page 124)

An old superstition runs to the effect that if a member of the family dies, and the bees are not told of the fact and their hives put into mourning, they will forsake the premises. Observance of the curious superstition once existed in rural New England.

1. Here is the place. It is Whittier's own homestead that is described.

THE SYCAMORES [1857] (Page 126)

9. Celtic. The Irish are one of the Celtic peoples of Europe. Among them, also, are the Scotch, French, Italians, and Spanish. The Germans, Swedish, Danish, and English are, generally speaking, Teutons.

12. Amphion, according to the fable, built Thebes by the music of his lute.

13. Hugh Tallant, an Irishman, was an early settler of Haverhill, Mass., Whittier's early home.

27–28. Cluny and **Mear** are the names of religious times.

47. Yorkshire is a northern county of England.

51. St. Keven, or St. Cœmgen (498–618), was a saint of the early Christian Church in Ireland. His behavior with the sackcloth ladder attests the antiquity of the Hibernian temperament.

53. Tara was a great hall upon a hill in Meath, Ireland, where kings and clergy assembled for the discussion of public matters.

111. Tadmor, a Syriac name for the ancient city of Palmyra in the Syrian desert.

112. Marks is altered to "mocks" in the latest editions.

121. Keezar. See the poem, *Cobbler Keezar's Vision.*

THE DOUBLE-HEADED SNAKE OF NEWBURY [1859] (Page 131)

The legend of the double-headed snake is contained in that great repository of early New England lore and legend, Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, the "Wonder-Book" mentioned in the poem.

5. The Python was a huge serpent engendered in the mud of

the Deluge, according to Greek mythology, and slain by Apollo.

6. Deucalion was the Greek Noah.

9. Newbury is a small town in Essex County, Mass.

22. Cheops was the builder of the so-called Great Pyramid of Egypt.

42. The Northman's Written Rock is a large boulder whereon still remain certain inscriptions asserted by some to have been carved there by Norsemen in their supposed colonization of New England in the tenth century.

59. Common Pasture. The present day commons in many New England towns were formerly free pasture land for the cattle of the village. Placed in the centre of the town, they occupied the position of greatest safety from the incursions of Indians.

76. Cotton Mather (1663–1728) a famous preacher and writer, author of the *Magnalia Christi Americana.*

THE SWAN SONG OF PARSON AVERY [1858] (Page 134)

THE TRUCE OF PISCATAQUA [1860] (Page 138)

"In the winter of 1675–1676, the Eastern Indians, who had been making war upon the New Hampshire settlements, were so reduced in numbers by fighting and famine that they agreed to a peace with Major Waldron at Dover, but the peace was broken in the fall of 1676. The famous chief, Squando, was the principal negotiator on the part of the savages. He had taken up the hatchet to revenge the brutal treatment of his child by drunken white sailors, which caused its death." (Author's note.)

6. The Cocheco River is a small tributary of the Piscataqua River in New Hampshire.

11. Piscataqua. This river forms part of the boundary between New Hampshire and Maine, and enters the Atlantic at Portsmouth.

43. Saco. This region is in York County, Maine.

65. The totem of my child. Totems are objects of worship among savages. Sometimes they are animals, sometimes images. A person or a tribe chooses a totem because of some relationship conceived to exist naturally between the chooser and his totem.

71. Manito. The Great Spirit, worshipped by the American Indians.

104. Parted . . . like Egypt's wave. This refers to the passage of the children of Israel through the Red Sea. Exodus xiv.

143. Wampum. Chains of certain kinds of shells were much prized by the Indians, among whom they were used in place of money.

202. Painful minister. "Painful" is here used in its old sense of "careful."

MY PLAYMATE [1860] (Page 145)

In a few reminiscent poems like this one, and *Memories*, one catches the echo of personal romance in Whittier's life.

THE GIFT OF TRITEMIUS [1857] (Page 148)

17. Tunis is the capital of the Barbary State of the same name on the coast of Africa, bordering on the Mediterranean Sea.

THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW [1858] (Page 149)

This poem is based on an historic incident of the great Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 in India. The isolated garrison at Lucknow, a large city in the province of Oude, was relieved by the heroic march of a small British army under Sir Henry Havelock.

9. The Lowland reaper. The counties of southern Scotland are called the Lowlands, in contrast with the northern Highlands.

12. The Scottish pipes are bagpipes, a peculiar wind-instrument for the production of music.

13. Pibroch is the name of a kind of Scottish air, generally martial. By a common confusion, which even Lord Byron does not escape, the word is applied to the instrument upon which the air is played, *i.e.* the bagpipe.

36. Sepoys were natives of Hindustan, employed by Great Britain as soldiers.

46-47. Campbells and **MacGregors** were Scottish clans represented in the relief expedition. The usual uniform of the

Highland clans in Scotland is made of plaid, the design being characteristic of the clan.

52. Goomtee. A river of Hindustan entering the Ganges sixteen miles below Benares.

77. Gaelic is an old word sometimes used to describe the race and language of the Highland Scotch, and of the Irish as well.

THE RED RIVER VOYAGEUR [1859] (Page 152)

8. The wild Assiniboins are an Indian tribe living in Manitoba and the adjacent regions of Canada.

24. St. Boniface is a town in Manitoba on the Red River, and is now a centre of Roman Catholic education.

BARBARA FRIETCHIE [1863] (Page 154)

The facts which underlie this poem have been the subject of much debate. It is clear that Whittier wrote the poem in faith supposing that he had been correctly informed of the incident. It is now agreed, however, that the real Barbara Frietchie did not wave the Union flag at the Confederate troops of "Stonewall" Jackson as they passed out of Frederick, Md., on September 10, 1862, and that General Jackson did not himself pass her house at all. But it is also agreed that Barbara Frietchie, then ninety-six years old, was a stanch Union sympathizer and did freely express her patriotic sentiments during the stay of the Confederates in the town. Also, upon the same street, another woman, Mrs. Mary Quantrell, displayed at this time a Union flag to the Confederates, one of whom, tradition states, tried, contrary to orders, to take it from her. Finally, on September 13 and 14, a portion of McClellan's army passed through Frederick, and on one of these days the aged Barbara Frietchie came out upon her porch and waved a flag at the passing soldiers.

10. Lee. General Robert E. Lee, the commander-in-chief of the Confederate armies.

24. "Stonewall" Jackson. General Thomas J. Jackson (1824–1863), one of the greatest of the Confederate commanders, won the epithet, "Stonewall," at the battle of Manassas Junction, 1861, by the firmness with which he held his position, and thereby turned defeat into victory.

COBBLER KEEZAR'S VISION [1861] (Page 156)

"Cobbler Keezar" was one of the early settlers of the valley of the Merrimac River, and a noted character in his time.

19. The Brocken is the highest peak of the Hartz Mountains in Germany, about which cluster a vast number of myths and legends.

84. Doctor Dee (1527–1608) was an English astrologer who possessed a magic crystal in which he professed to read the future.

85. Agrippa. Henry Cornelius Agrippa (1486–1535) was an alchemist, *i.e.* one of the mediæval chemists whose aim was the transmutation of metals into gold.

89. The Minnesingers were minstrels who lived in Germany from about 1138 to 1294. The word means "love-singers," and these minstrels were so called because their usual subject was love.

139. Bingen is a city on the Rhine River in Germany.

140. Frankfort-on-the-Main is one of the most important cities of Prussia.

AMY WENTWORTH [1862] (Page 163)

The name Wentworth was a conspicuous one in the history of the New England colonies. Benning Wentworth was a governor of New Hampshire, and his nephew, Sir John Wentworth, succeeded him in that office, both in the first half of the eighteenth century.

29. Grim as Vernet's. Horace Vernet (1789–1863) was a French painter of much reputation for his treatment of military subjects.

35. As Nürnberg sang while Wittenberg defied. These are the names of important German cities.

36. Kranach painted by his Luther's side. Lucas von Kranach, or Cranoch (1472–1553), was a German painter and engraver, contemporary with Martin Luther (1483–1546), the great reformer.

38. Marvell's music. Andrew Marvell (1621–1678) was a Puritan poet of high rank, the friend and contemporary of Milton.

47. Fijian. The Fiji islanders of the South Seas were once renowned for cannibalism.

THE COUNTESS [1863] (Page 169)

This poem was dedicated by its author to Dr. Elias Weld, who is the old doctor in *Snow-Bound*. "He was," says Whittier, "the one cultivated man in the neighborhood. His small but well-chosen library was placed at my disposal."

"Count François de Vipart with his cousin Joseph Rochment de Poyere came to the United States in the early part of the present [nineteenth] century. They took up their residence at Rocks Village on the Merrimac, where they both married. The wife of Count Vipart was Mary Elliot, who, as my father remembered her, was a very lovely young girl." (Author's note.) She died within a year of her marriage and her husband returned to France.

109. The Gascon land. Gascony was an old province in the southwest of France.

156. Garonne. The Garonne River rises in the Pyrenees and flows in general northwestward into the Bay of Biscay.

175. Gallic, *i.e.* French. The word is derived from the ancient name of France, Gaul.

THE FROST SPIRIT [1830] (Page 175)

This poem is an interesting experiment in an unusual metre. Written in 1830, it is one of Whittier's earlier poems on Nature.

11. Mt. Hecla is an active volcano in Iceland.

RANDOLPH OF ROANOKE [1847] (Page 176)

John Randolph of Roanoke (1773–1833) was a highly eccentric but greatly gifted native of Virginia, conspicuous in the political life of America during the earlier portion of the last century. He was at various times member of Congress and Senator from Virginia. Politically he was a firm believer in the states' rights doctrine. Though he was the owner of many slaves on his enormous estates, he foresaw the peril of the institution, and in his will, made in 1821, he gave his own slaves their freedom.

39. Clio was one of the nine muses of the Greek mythology. Her province was History.

61. The **Neva** is one of the largest rivers of Russia. St. Petersburg is situated upon it. Randolph visited Russia in 1830 upon a special government mission and during the same absence from America spent nearly a year in Great Britain.

105. Patrick Henry (1736–1799) the Virginia patriot whose speeches in connection with American independence are household words in American homes.

108. The Sage of Monticello was Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), the third president of the United States.

THE NORSEMEN [1841] (Page 180)

1. Gift from the . . . Past. A few years before this poem was written a portion of a statue, rudely carved, had been found at Bradford on the Merrimac River. That it was left there by the Norsemen is highly conjectural, although it is generally admitted that they visited and possibly established some settlement in America, several centuries before the era of Columbus.

52. Of Thulé's night. Thulé was a name given to the most remote northern land known to the ancients. Pytheas, a Greek navigator, says it is "six days' sail from Britain." It may have been Iceland, or the Faroe Islands. Cf. William Black's novel, *Ultima Thule*, the scene of which lies in the Hebrides.

55. Jutland is the northern part of the peninsula which embraces the continental part of Denmark. **Lochlin** was a Gaelic name for Scandinavia — though it generally refers to Denmark.

70. To Saga's chant and Runic rhyme. The legends of the Norse mythology were called sagas. The early Norsemen had a peculiar alphabet, consisting of sixteen characters called runes, in which their earliest composition are written.

71. Zetland is an old name for the Shetland Islands, north of Scotland. **Scalds** were the court poets and chroniclers of the ancient Scandinavians.

74. Odin was chief of the Scandinavian gods, the god of victory.

77. The **Gaels** were the earliest historic settlers of the British Isles. They survive in the Irish, Scotch, and Welsh of to-day.

78. The **Franks** were inhabitants of much of what to-day is called France.

79. Iona's sable-stoled Culdee. Christianity was introduced into Scotland from Ireland, in the fifth century, or earlier. The earliest Christian church in Scotland may have stood on Iona, a small island on the west coast of Scotland. The heads of these early churches were called Culdees, or bishops.

92. Berserker was the name of a mythological hero of Scandinavia, who was so called because he went to war "bare of sark," or coat of mail.

93. Valhalla was, in Scandinavian mythology, the place inhabited by the souls of heroes slain in battle.

98. The **Druids** were the priests of an ancient religion whose rites were observed by various tribes in Britain, Gaul, and Germany.

FORGIVENESS [1846] (Page 184)

Notice how the movement of this poem is affected by the use, not very common, in Whittier, of "run-on" lines; *i.e* of lines whose units of grammatical phrase do not end with the line in which they begin, but are continued into the next. Compare lines 1 and 4 with lines 2 and 3.

WHAT THE VOICE SAID [1847] (Page 185)

14. The **Titans** were giants, in the Greek mythology, sons of Heaven and Earth.

41. The Parsees are fire-worshippers, adherents of Zoroastrianism, the ancient religion of Persia.

43. The Tartars were Mongols of Tartary in Asia.

EXTRACT FROM "A NEW ENGLAND LEGEND" [1833]

(Page 188)

53. The charmed Ausonian shore is that of Italy; so named from Auson, the son of Ulysses.

60. Albion, a poetic name for England. "**Glammarye**," an old form of the word "glamour."

61. In Melrose Abbey sleeping. Sir Walter Scott is buried in Melrose Abbey, in Melrose in southern Scotland.

72. "**Catechise**," a colloquialism for the Shorter Catechism learning which was a common form of religious practice in New England.

73. "**Webster's Spelling-Book.**" Noah Webster's Spelling Book was studied in every New England school in Whittier's generation.

HAMPTON BEACH [1843] (Page 190)

This poem, written in 1843, should be read in connection with the group of later poems entitled *The Tent on the Beach* (1867). With them it contains a clear expression of Whittier's love for the ocean shore. Certain of its passages are of remarkable beauty. Hampton Beach lies at the mouth of the Hampton River near the southern extremity of the short stretch of sea-coast that New Hampshire possesses.

As an early expression of Whittier's love of Nature, it may be compared with *The Frost Spirit*, and *To A. K.*

THE HILL-TOP [1850] (Page 193)

The localities mentioned in this poem are all in central New Hampshire.

MEMORIES [1841] (Page 196)

This poem possesses a romantic interest. Whittier never married, but it is supposed that this poem refers to a disappointed love of his young manhood.

ICHABOD [1850] (Page 198)

This remarkable expression of sorrowful indignation was called forth by the famous speech of Daniel Webster, on the

7th of March, 1850. In that speech Webster proposed certain compromises with the South as a means of settling the slavery issue. Throughout New England the speech was regarded as a sacrifice of principle by Webster, prompted by his ambition for the Presidency. Historians now generally vindicate the statesmanship of Webster's speech. That Whittier himself changed his opinion upon the matter may be seen by comparing this poem with *The Lost Occasion*. *Ichabod*, however, is in the opinion of some critics Whittier's most powerful poem.

TO A. K. (AVIS KEENE) [1850] (Page 201)

This exquisite poem is remarkable in two ways. As a poem purely upon Nature it is one of Whittier's earliest, and, shall we not say, one of his very best. Moreover, it is one of Whittier's few experiments in an irregular metre. His success is so great that one can but wish he had possessed a greater interest in the technical problems of his art.

MOLOCH IN STATE STREET [1851] (Page 204)

Moloch was a Phœnician god to whom sacrifices of children were made.

9. The first drawn blood of Freedom's veins. Crispus Attucks, a negro, was the first to fall by a British bullet in the days preceding the War of the Revolution. He was killed in Boston while leading a mob against British soldiers in 1770.

20. Sir Harry Vane (1612–1662) was a governor of the Colony of Massachusetts.

23. Andros, Hutchinson. Sir Edmund Andros (1637–1714) and Thomas Hutchinson (1711–1780) were among the early colonial governors of Massachusetts.

24. Gage. General Thomas Gage (1720?–1787) was commander of the British forces in Boston when the Revolution began.

28. Tyrian. Tyre was a Phœnician seaport, famed for its purple dyes.

65. Even now, the peal of bell. At the time when this poem was written, Charles Sumner had just been elected to the United States Senate, holding professed anti-slavery principles. There

had been a great effort to keep the slavery question out of politics.

APRIL [1852] (Page 207)

This poem may be studied as one of the earlier of Whittier's poems to be occupied exclusively with the description of Nature. Compare with *The Frost Spirit*, and *To A. K.*, and *Hampton Beach*.

27. Nature, like Lazarus. See *John* xi. 1–46.

TO MY OLD SCHOOLMASTER [1851] (Page 209)

"These lines were addressed to my worthy friend, Joshua Coffin, teacher, historian, antiquarian. He was one of the twelve persons who with William Lloyd Garrison formed the first anti-slavery society in New England." (Author's note.)

41. Old Phædrus' twofold gift. Phædrus: a Latin writer of the Augustan, who translated and imitated the Fables of Æsop.

43. Laughter and sagacity he counsels; *i.e.* gives instruction and pleasure at the same time.

62. The wrinkled sibyl. Sibyls were women supposed to prophesy, under the inspiration of some Roman deity.

66. Over Gibeon. See *Joshua* x. 1–14.

82. Belzoni. Giovanni Belzoni (1778?-1823) was an Italian explorer of Egypt.

97. Cavalier. The name frequently given to the adherents of Charles I in his struggle against Cromwell.

126. Fire of Pentecost. See *Acts* ii. 1–4.

173. After Sternhold's heart. Thomas Sternhold (d. 1549) was an English versifier of the Psalms.

175. Oldbug. "Dr. Withington, author of *The Puritan* under the name of Jonathan Oldbug." (Author's note.)

176. South. Robert South.

BURNS [1854] (Page 215)

In this poem Whittier acknowledges his deep indebtedness to Burns, and tells how "the older poet awoke the younger."

(See Introduction.) It is written in the ballad-metre that was a favorite with Burns. Robert Burns (1759–1796), the most popular of Scottish poets, hardly needs further introduction here.

38. "The Twa Dogs" is the title of one of Burns's poems.

67–68. Craigieburn and **Devon** were favorite streams of Burns's. The Devon is a river in Perthshire. "Burn" means "small stream."

71. The **Ayr and Doon** are streams of Ayrshire in southwestern Scotland.

79. The Bible at his cotter's hearth. See Burns's *The Cotter's Saturday Night.*

103. The mournful Tuscan was Dante (1265–1321), the author of *The Divine Comedy*, one of the three greatest epics.

116. His Highland Mary. See Burns's *Highland Mary.* Mary Morison, therein commemorated, who died when young, was an early love of Burns's.

THE VOICES [1854] (Page 220)

THE HERO [1853] (Page 223)

The hero commemorated in this poem is Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, husband of Julia Ward Howe, author of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic.* As a young man he fought with the Greeks in their war for separation from Turkey.

1. A knight like Bayard. The Chevalier Pierre du Terrail de Bayard (1475–1524) was famed throughout Europe as the most chivalrous knight of his time.

6. Zutphen. Sir Philip Sidney (1554–1586), an English poet, stands as the type of chivalry (in English history). He was killed in the battle of Zutphen, 1586.

31. The far Cyllenian ranges. Mt. Cyllene is a famous mountain of Greece situated near the centre of the Peloponnesus.

36. The Suliotes were inhabitants of the region of Suli, in southern Albania.

45. The Albanians lived in Albania, a province in European Turkey, north of Greece, and bordering on the Adriatic and Ionian seas.

53. Allah, the Mohammedan name for God.

55. Thessaly is a district in northeastern Greece.

72. The barricades of Seine. Howe after took part in the fighting in Paris in the Revolution of 1848.

78. Cadmus was, according to legend, the inventor of the alphabet.

86. Sir Lancelot and his peers. The knights of the Round Table in King Arthur's legendary court. See Tennyson's *Idylls of the King.*

THE BAREFOOT BOY [1855] (Page 227)

This deservedly popular poem is reminiscent of Whittier's own boyhood.

63. Apples of Hesperides. "The Hesperides were the women who guarded the golden apples which Earth gave to Here (*Juno*) at her marriage with Zeus (*Jove*)." Brewer's *Reader's Handbook.*

THE KANSAS EMIGRANTS [1854] (Page 228)

Between 1855 and 1858 there was a desperate struggle between the friends and the opponents of slavery to colonize the territory of Kansas, into which the institution of slavery had been admitted by act of Congress in 1854. Each party hoped to gain the control of the political administration of the territory and thereby save the coming state for its principles. The conflict was so severe that in 1856 a state of civil war prevailed, and armed bands of emigrants were formed and sent into the territory by North and by South alike. Whittier's poem was a campaign song among the earliest of these emigrant parties from the North.

SONG OF SLAVES IN THE DESERT [1847] (Page 230)

The passage from Richardson's *Journal,* containing the incident upon which these haunting stanzas are based, is quoted by Whittier, viz.: —

"*Sebah, Oasis of Fezzan,* 10*th March,* 1846. This evening the female slaves were unusually excited in singing, and I had the curiosity to ask my negro servant, Said, what they were singing about. As many of them were natives of his own coun-

try, he had no difficulty in translating the Mandara or Bornou language. I had often asked the Moors to translate their songs for me, but got no satisfactory account from them. Said at first said, 'Oh, they sing of *Rubee*' (God). 'What do you mean?' I replied impatiently. 'Oh, don't you know?' he continued, 'they ask God to give them their *Atka*' (certificate of freedom). I inquired, 'Is that all?' Said: 'No; they say, "Where are we going? The world is large. *God! Where are we going? O God!*"' I inquired, 'What else?' Said: 'They remember their country, Bornou, and say, "*Bornou was a pleasant country, full of all good things; but this is a bad country, and we are miserable!*"' 'Do they say anything else?' Said: 'No; they repeat these words over and over again, and add, "O God! give us our *Atka, and let us return again to our dear home.*"'"

THE LAST WALK IN AUTUMN [1857] (Page 233)

The philosophy of content which finds expression in this poem is of a piece with that in *Snow-Bound*.

34. The white pagodas of the snow. Compare with the description of the well-curb in *Snow-Bound*.

55. The **Arno** valley is that in which Florence stands, in northern Italy.

56. The **Alhambra** is a Moorish palace of great architectural beauty in Seville, Spain.

64. Minarets are slender, tapering towers on Mohammedan mosques, or religious temples.

66. Pharpar. The Pharpar was a river of Damascus. See 2 *Kings* v.

69. Ind, *i.e.* India.

71. Persian Hafiz, a renowned Persian (1300?–1390?).

72. Rome's cathedral, *i.e.* St. Peter's.

80. The Kosmos, *i.e.* the universe.

93. Bacon. Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was a great English philosopher, sometimes called the founder of modern experimental science.

94. Pascal, Blaise Pascal (1623–1662), was a great French philosopher and mathematician.

105. Plato, who lived in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C.,

was one of the two greatest of Greek thinkers, Aristotle, his pupil, being the other.

110. Poor Richard's Almanack, written and published by Benjamin Franklin, is still a classic in American literature.

111. The Sufi's song, the Gentoo's dream. The Sufis were members of a sect of Persian Mohammedans. The Brahmins of Hindustan were sometimes called Gentoos.

112. Menu's age of thought. Menu was a Hindoo law-giver.

117. The magic mat. The reference is to a familiar story in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*.

120. Nubia . . . Phrygia. Nubia is a region in the Sudan, in eastern Africa. Phrygia was a province in ancient Asia Minor.

121–125. And he, . . . the statesman, was Charles Sumner, Senator from Massachusetts, a warm friend of Whittier's.

126. The Athenian archon. The archon was one of the chief civil and religious magistrates of Athens.

127. Struck down. Sumner was brutally attacked in the Senate chamber at Washington by Preston Brooks, of South Carolina, and severely injured.

148. The Cross without the Bear. The traveller south of the equator finds the Southern Cross to be the most conspicuous constellation of stars in his heaven. The constellation of the Great Bear, containing the "Big Dipper" is not then visible, being below the northern horizon.

151. The Line, *i.e.* the equator.

162. Gay Versailles or Windsor's halls. At Versailles was a palace of the French Emperors. Windsor Castle on the Thames River is a palace of the English royalty.

166. Gothic groin. A peculiar angle made by the intersection of curved surfaces in certain Gothic arches. For an illustration, see Webster's Dictionary.

168. Milan, a city in northern Italy.

179. Arcadian vales. Arcadia was the name of a region in central Greece.

THE MAYFLOWERS [1856] (Page 242)

The trailing arbutus, called sometimes the mayflower in New England, was the first flower that the early Pilgrims saw after the fearful winter of 1810.

THE EVE OF ELECTION (Page 243)

This poem commemorates the state election of 1858.

55. The blood of Vane. Sir Henry Vane was beheaded two years after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, because of his prominence in the government of Cromwell.

60. Her Russell. Lord William Russell, an English patriot, was beheaded in 1683.

MY PSALM [1859] (Page 247)

THY WILL BE DONE [1861] (Page 249)

This poem should be read in the light of its composition, at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, and also in the light of Whittier's peace-loving Quaker faith.

THE BATTLE AUTUMN OF 1862 [1862] (Page 251)

This finely courageous lyric was written during a period of the most desperate and uncertain warfare, the general results of which had been on the whole not unfavorable to the South. Among many severe battles the following stand out: Antietam, Corinth, Fredericksburg, and Stone River.

OUR RIVER [1861] (Page 252)

This poem was written about the Merrimac River, always a favorite subject with Whittier.

11. Brissot. Jean Pierre Brissot, a famous leader in the French Revolution visited America when a young man, and admired particularly the scenery of the Merrimac.

21. Arno's banks. The Arno is a river of northern Italy.

23. The Doon and Ayr. See page 283, line 71.

31. Undine. The story of this water-sylph whose home was in river-beds is contained in De la Motte Fouqué's *Undine*.

35. Dian. Diana was, in Grecian mythology, the virgin goddess of the hunt.

39. The Naiads were, in the same mythology, water-nymphs.

LAUS DEO [1865] (Page 255)

This song of praise and triumph marks the conclusion of the struggle against slavery. The passage by Congress of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery took place on January 31, 1865, but it was not ratified by the required number of states till December 18 of the same year. The poem "wrote itself, or rather sang itself," he wrote to a friend, "while the bells rang" which announced the passage of the amendment. The poem was complete in the poet's mind before he wrote a line of it on paper. The reader should observe how full the poem is of biblical phraseology.

27. Miriam was the sister of Moses. The expressions which follow are found in the song of Moses upon the escape of the Israelites through the Red Sea. *Exodus* xv. 1.

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